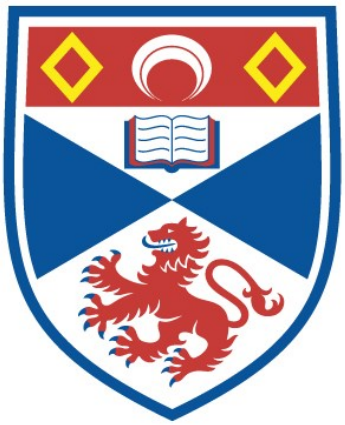
HEAVEN AND THE 'BASILEUS' IN ST JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

Constanze M.F. Schummer

A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of PhD
at the
University of St Andrews



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Heaven and the Basileus

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St. John Chrysostom

A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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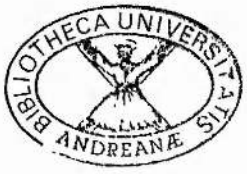
January 1990



Declarations

I, Constanze Maria Friederike Schummer, hereby certify that this thesis, which is approximately 103 000 words in length, has been written by me, that it is the record of work carried out by me and that it has not been submitted in any previous application for a higher degree.

Date 29th Jan 90 Signature of Candidate.....

I was admitted as a research student under Ordinance No. 12 in October 1986 and as a candidate for the degree of Ph.D. in October 1987; the higher study for which this is a record was carried out in the University of St. Andrews between 1986 and 1990.

Date 29th Jan 90 Signature of Candidate.....

I hereby certify that the candidate has fulfilled the conditions of the Resolution and Regulations appropriate for the degree of Ph.D. in the University of St. Andrews and that the candidate is qualified to submit this thesis in application for that degree.

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Contents

Heaven and the *Basileus* in St. John Chrysostom

Abstract

The thesis takes its inspiration from a parallel central to Byzantine ideology: God enthroned in heaven, governing the universe, is mirrored on earth by the emperor surrounded by his court, ruling his realm. The earliest definitive formulation of this doctrine is expressed by Eusebius of Caesarea in the 'Tricennial Orations' held for Constantine the Great in A.D. 336. The thesis briefly documents this formulation and then takes a look at the further evolution of this parallel in some fourth century Fathers. Here the parallel becomes a metaphor in that the earthly *basileus* is frequently employed to explain and describe God. At the same time, the attitudes towards the earthly *basileus* need not be positive.

After having thus set the scene, the thesis moves on to its primary task and explores heaven and the *basileus* in St. John Chrysostom. The sheer bulk of his work is matched by the complexity of his views in this respect, far removed from the apparent simplicity of the Eusebian model. After documenting his ideas about the technique of metaphor, and about the application of such a parallel as that of God and *basileus*, I examine Chrysostom's metaphorical use of the *basileus* in his explanations of inexprimable divine qualities. The *basileus* takes more shape when Chrysostom describes him in the context of the Old Testament, of early imperial history, or as a contemporary ruler. These portrayals are suitably followed by an exploration of Chrysostom's uncompromising interpretation of the relationship between priest and ruler. A short excursus on his attitude towards imperial and Christian symbols rounds off this extensive treatment of the *basileus*. The next two chapters concentrate on how Chrysostom describes heaven and what role is played by imperial terminology and concepts in these descriptions. Finally, the possible influence of St. Paul on Chrysostom in these areas is considered – partly because the *topos* of the Apostle in the power of the pagan *basileus* Nero appears frequently, partly because St. Paul turns out to be a major *Leitfigur* for Chrysostom.

This bulky documentation works exclusively from texts dating from Chrysostom's life in Antioch. His move to Constantinople and into the direct environment of the real *basileus* presents a chronological step of the utmost

importance in the context of the God - *basileus* parallel. Introducing this chronological divide in the course of the thesis obviously involves a close attention to the dating of Chrysostom's works, which in many cases is not unequivocal. The thesis tries to show that the awareness of a chronology of metaphorical language within Chrysostom's works can help with the dating of individual texts. Although this possibility was resorted to very sparingly here for fear of introducing a circular argument, it merits becoming a stronger element in studies on Chrysostom.

For the Constantinopolitan period, the thesis tries to ascertain whether Chrysostom's view of the earthly *basileus* and his use of metaphors based on this *basileus* in the description of heaven are influenced and changed by his experience of imperial reality. The most interesting question then is to what extent Chrysostom's metaphorical use of 'the *basileus*' in all its different shades of meaning precipitated his fate at imperial hands.

As the conclusion argues, these findings are of special interest in view of the popularity Chrysostom enjoyed throughout Byzantine history. It is possible that with his extensive metaphorical use of the *basileus* he was a model and an influence in theological and ideological issues. There is the possibility that descriptions that were intended by Chrysostom to show the limitations of earthly rule in comparison with heavenly power may have been misunderstood, due to subtlety of expression, as describing a full parallel between God and *basileus*. This applies both to contemporary audiences and later readers and supports a hypothesis that Byzantine propaganda was not so much constructed by masterminds as inferred by audiences.

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These paragraphs are in a way the most important of the thesis. Without so many good spirits in the air around me it would never have been written. Thanks are due to the generosity of the University of St. Andrews in awarding me the Ramsay Scholarship. There are the muniments experts of the Library of St. Andrews University to be thanked, especially Geoffrey Hargreaves and Christine Gascoigne. Vital for the progress of the thesis were the Operators and Advisors of the University Computing Laboratory. With incredible patience and cheerfulness did they nurse me through its creation by means of this wonderful machine, the Apple Macintosh. The Studienstiftung des Deutschen Volkes, who had supported me as an undergraduate, continued to keep in touch, which in itself was encouragement. The contact and exchange with the formidable minds here at St. Andrews inspired me and showed me what to aim for. Professor Martin Kemp of Art History is to me an awesome example of how to reanimate the mind, the being of one's subject without invading or bending it. Having been taught by him as an undergraduate, I still draw on this experience. Professor Ian Kidd, emeritus holder of the chair of Greek, personifies to me calm and wise scholarship and, again, such respect for his subject matter.

Further afield, thanks go especially to the lively and active community of Byzantinists and theologians at The Queen's University, Belfast. A week in Belfast at a crucial stage of my work was all organised for and lavished on me by Dr. Margaret Mullet and Dion Smythe, both of whom I thank especially, also Dr. Deirdre Carrabine for giving me some insight into her work on apophatic and kataphatic theology and philosophy, and Dr. Anna Wilson for hours of inspiring conversation. Another 'external' influence came from the Sail Training Association - over the years life on the sloping decks of the "Malcolm Miller" taught me much that made this undertaking easier. I would like to thank Captain A. Allenby and Chief Officer R. Stephenson for putting me through my paces before I started on the last leg of the thesis. And I want to thank Heather and Ted Wong for giving me a home whenever I did research in London, and encouraging me with so much friendship.

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Historical Research and the Department of Mediaeval History, both captained enthusiastically and encourangingly by Professor Donald Bullough. The Byzantine family in St. Andrews was really just that - a healthy group ever ready to give encouragement and share enthusiasm, and for this and much genuine friendship many thanks go to Dr. Ruth Macrides, Shaun Tougher, Dr. Mary and Dr. Michael Whitby. The greatest anxiety in the making of a thesis must be suffered by a conscientious supervisor, in this case Dr. Paul Magdalino of the Department of Mediaeval History. His greatest virtues are probably his patience and his loyalty. Despite everything, he remained a firm friend. Always it was both challenging and fruitful to discuss progress together. He never allowed me just to beaver away looking in front of me. His greatest concern was that the thesis would stand up unaided, making sense both within itself and to any interested mind. At the same time, he had the wisdom to let it follow its natural course - we started with something quite different and ended up with Chrysostom. It should also be said that he did more than anybody else to improve my written English, a task he set about with relentless zeal from the day I handed him my very first Mediaeval History essay. If the thesis fails in any way, it is because I failed to emulate his concerns. I certainly had the best possible conditions to produce good work.

I would like to thank especially all those friends who supported me through the *very* final moments of this work - Anne Johnston and Alice Correa, Christine and Henry Paul, Sabine Jackson, Hadia and Zeina Beydoun, Cheyenne Westphal, Kate and Giles Dove and my mother, Annemarie Schummer. The "Malcolm Miller" and her ship's company under Captain David Mattingly and Chief Officer Hugh O'Neill came to the rescue at a vital moment, refreshing me and restoring my sanity. They all gave support, good sense, good cheer and much understanding and this experience brought home to me just what a wonderful privilege true friendship is. Special thanks go to Dr. Michael Whitby, who in his capacity of internal examiner supervised the quite substantial post-viva corrections. What could have been traumatic thus turned into a rewarding experience of learning thanks to his clear-sighted, practical and most constructive guidance and to the generous amounts of time and comittment he invested in me and my thesis.

Introduction

This study has its origin in the observation that the comparison of the imperial court and the role of the emperor with heaven and the Godhead runs through Byzantine ideological thinking in all ages.[1] During the so-called 'Macedonian Renaissance' this ideology finds its perhaps most flamboyant and colourful expression in literature, ceremony and courtly art. But however attractive this and other periods may be, it quickly became apparent that it would be an incomplete achievement to explore the comparison in any context without having gained clarification about its roots. Therefore, the next objective was to go back to the beginnings of Byzantium, to take Eusebius of Caesarea's statements in his 'Tricennial Orations' as a point of departure and monitor the parallel between God, the Ruler of All, and the *basileus*, the Ruler of the Earth, through the subsequent centuries, maybe as far as the age of Justinian and Heraclius.

Beginning work on the Christian writers of the fourth century active in a Byzantine orbit meant reading the Greek Fathers, and introducing oneself to theological issues on an unexpected scale. Research revealed that the God-*basileus* parallel appears to an interesting, though not overwhelming degree in the works of the fourth-century Fathers, tempered by a not altogether unfounded distrust of that antitype, the impious emperor. The findings of this enquiry into Athanasius of Alexandria and the Cappadocians as the successors of Eusebius form the first chapter of this thesis.

The intended format of the thesis then rapidly changed when the evidence gleaned from the huge output of John Chrysostom began to swamp everything gathered from the Fathers so far. Not only the sheer number of pertinent passages and excerpts, but also the great variety of attitudes and interpretations increasingly apparent in these isolated items made it necessary to rethink the project. In Chrysostom, the simple parallel God-*basileus*, heaven-court takes on a metaphorical life of its own, proliferating into a bewildering number of shades of meaning and application. To do justice to

[1] G. Ostrogorsky, "The Byzantine Emperor and the Hierarchical World Order", *The Slavonic and East European Review* 35 (1956), 1-14, especially p.1-2 is probably still the best-formulated acknowledgment of this fact, stating its influence on both Byzantines and Byzantinists.

Chrysostom and fully represent his use of imperial terminology on heavenly subjects and his varying views of imperial rule the thesis would have to be devoted to him, within a framework of the earlier authors and perhaps a look ahead towards further projects.

This in itself would have warranted that the thesis be devoted solely to John Chrysostom against a background sketch of the fourth century. But added to that must be the importance of Chrysostom both in his own time and above all in subsequent ages as a spiritual mainstay of Byzantine and orthodox faith and outlook. He thus must have been a major factor in shaping Byzantine thinking, and it is only reasonable to expect that his astonishingly frequent use of terminology connected with the *basileus* in descriptions of heaven crept into the evolution of Byzantine ideology.

Concentrating on Chrysostom meant that, having gained the initial impression of his writings that lead to this decision, the parameters of working on him had to be redefined. Conditions surrounding this figure that in a cursory chapter would have been woven into the general argument now have to be covered individually. It became imperative to survey all his works in order to arrive at truly representative results. Not only does Chrysostom contain so much evidence connected with the God-*basileus* parallel, he also offers an interesting context - after having evolved and established his habits of preaching and speaking for almost twenty years in provincial Antioch, he becomes Bishop of Constantinople, in the immediate environment of *the basileus*. How this change affected his use of the God-*basileus* parallel, and even whether and how the metaphor itself affected his fate in this different atmosphere must be amongst the most fascinating questions asked in the course of the study.

This break results in the division of the discussion into a first part referring to the material gained from the Antioch period, and a second dealing with the complexities that arise in Chrysostom's work during his time in Constantinople and subsequently in exile. The chapters covering the period at Antioch are intended to collate and classify evidence, and to observe and sketch trends and habits. This presentation of the material is their primary purpose, and not so much the leap to lengthy conclusions. Of course certain conclusions I would suggest become apparent, but not in a streamlined and pungent argument. For such an argument would invariably suppress any evidence that would not fit in with it, whereas the aim of this thesis is to set out *all* the evidence.

When discussing the texts from Chrysostom's years in Constantinople, the aim is more ambitious. There, less material is available, while the context of Chrysostom's statements makes itself felt more powerfully. Both observance of and deviation from the metaphorical habits established for the Antioch period will have to be charted and interpreted. This is the most exciting part of the thesis because of my claim that these interpretations provide some additional explanations of and insights into what happened to Chrysostom in Constantinople.

Accordingly, the evidence packaged itself into the themes that appear in the table of contents - the list is a good indication of just how comprehensive is Chrysostom's attitude towards the *basileis* of both earth and heaven. Biblical and historical rulers as well as contemporary emperors are covered. There are informed references to life at court. Chrysostom's own position as a representative of the priesthood leads to his exact definition of the relationship between priest and ruler. He also explains why he uses imperial imagery to describe divine entities and processes, and how such descriptions are to be understood. That entails that his descriptions of heaven in these terms are examined. The nature of his work, which is mainly homiletic, leads to an investigation into the environment in which all these statements were made. Finally, the observations that were made in the course of all these investigations have to be taken to the period spent in Constantinople - and under the same headings, different results may be found, and have to be analysed and explained in turn. The search for explanations leads to a closer examination of Chrysostom's relationship with St. Paul. The end result shows a Christian preacher's very personal way of bringing the Word to his flock, and reveals that these very methods in turn influenced him and his life.

The task of investigating Chrysostom, therefore, seems very clear cut. But there is a range of points that must be mentioned. Firstly, such a straightforward structure only emerged after considerable immersion in his works. It is the result of hindsight and by no means apparent when using his output to any other end, be it that of theological research or pastoral care. Secondly, with all its clinical neatness answering to the scientific requirements of such a study the dissection of Chrysostom should never obliterate his personality. In fact, his character, and even more so his faith, prove to be vital factors in making sense of what happened to his life and thinking. The character springs out from every page of the texts. So does his faith, but it seems to me that the greatness and sincerity of Chrysostom's Christianity should command respect at all times. The historian here all too

easily finds himself trespassing, and tampering with the most intimate emotions of his subject.

In exploring Chrysostom and his concepts of heaven and of the *basileus*, one moves in a peculiarly unclaimed space amongst all the scholarship that concentrates on him. Chrysostom's life, the machinery behind his fate in Constantinople, his pastoral commitment, his use of scripture, several theological issues and their treatment by him, his language, his attitude to women, his views on various aspects of the Christian life have all been studied before, wholly or in part. This thesis does not want to reiterate the findings of these enquiries, nor does it want to venture too far into other largely unclaimed territories of Chrysostomology, although some of these issues must be touched upon because of their immediate relevance to the metaphor - like his attitude to preaching and to his flock, and his attitude to Scripture.

One of these important issues is the task of establishing an updated chronology of Chrysostom's works, and of answering the need for more precise dating of some crucial texts. Another issue, far more fascinating, is the relation of Chrysostom to St. Paul, which should be explored using the fullness of Chrysostom's texts and of the context of his life. But this would presumably be a task for a theologian – it must not be forgotten that the present study is undertaken by a historian.

This thesis can do little more than alert to these - and other - themes. The survey of the God-*basileus* metaphor in Chrysostom turned out to be necessary groundwork, uncovering many unexpected sidelines, but having collating, sorting and analysis as its principal tasks. The end result, as will be seen, was indeed a kind of classified, annotated anthology of Chrysostom's statements on this given theme. Many of these hundreds of quotations would merit a longer and much more detailed discussion. Also, many are extremely interesting quite apart from their references to the basileus. But giving them all the attention they merited invariably would have distracted from the main task of the thesis.

If the delights of connecting these findings with other areas of Chrysostomology have to be foregone for the time being, the same applies to related fields in the history of the age. The questions one would wish to find answered must be concerned with imperial ceremonial in Chrysostom's time, the concept of ideal kingship in antiquity, a more exhaustive study of the other Christian writers of the fourth and early fifth centuries, the

representation of the *basileus* in contemporary pagan sources, the evidence of Syriac literature, to name but a few. Again, many of these aspects have been studied, as Bibliography III will testify, but there was no space even to properly complement the evidence laid out in this thesis with these findings .

This work began with a Byzantinist wanting to find the origins of one of the most persistent Byzantine concepts. The outcome is a study almost exclusively on John Chrysostom, and a seemingly inbred study at that, with very little reference to anything else. That this in itself could happen speaks for the power and the importance of the evidence. That this evidence is also endlessly fascinating and has been neglected undeservedly may be a subjective opinion, but hopefully one that will, in due course, be shared by other scholars.

Conventions and Abbreviations

Studying St. John Chrysostom and writing about him will always present the same problems: how to reduce the immense bulk of his works to manageable dimensions. This thesis especially has to face up to that challenge, as it is essentially composed of hundreds of quotations. References, whether in the text or in footnotes, will be formatted for easy reading and identification. The following sequence is followed for all references to works of Chrysostom and other Fathers:

Title and Part and/or Chapter : Edition : Translation

The conventions for the different parts of these references also require attention. Titles are usually given in full, and for Chrysostom's countless homilies the familiar Latin titles are used. For his extensive commentaries on books of the Bible the following, hopefully instantly recognizable abbreviated format will be used, consisting of the standard abbreviated title of the biblical book prefixed by a capital C for Chrysostom:

C I Corinth. Homily. Chapter : Edition : Translation

For all other Fathers and their works full or obvious short titles will be used. This system should eliminate the confusion that is bound to reign when a host of abstract abbreviations are applied. Also, to indicate the title of a homily or commentary clearly in close conjunction with the quotation taken from it in itself presents a statement about the context and the atmosphere of this quotation. It should ensure that the general nature of a text is considered at the back of the reader's mind without the argument of the thesis being cluttered with untimely references to such context.

Accordingly, with this system in application there will be only a few definite abbreviations, and even these should be self-explanatory:

PG	Patrologia Graeca, Migne
SC	Sources Chrétiennes
B	Jean Bareille
LF	Library of the Fathers

BKV Bibliothek der Kirchenväter

CPG M. Geerard, *Clavis Patrum Graecorum* vol. 2 (Turnhout, 1974)

As editions, PG and SC were chosen. Details of isolated editions or translations of individual works can be found in the primary bibliographies, especially for works by Chrysostom. PG may be outdated in many respects, but it was considered as the edition that will be most accessible to most scholars, together with SC as its modern equivalent in this respect.

The process of integrating this study with the general context of the fourth century, of Antioch and of Constantinople, and with the findings and developments in Chrysostomology essentially takes place in the footnotes. After the first full reference, secondary titles will be quoted by author, short title and page.

It will be observed that the quotations are in English. Again, the primary bibliographies will make clear when this is my own translation - whenever no English translation exists or was available. Many texts were translated in the last century for the Library of the Fathers, and in these cases I have merely ventured to update their English, a process which essentially consisted of substituting 'you' for 'thou' and similar small amendments.

Even merely contemplating the task of looking for one particular metaphor, the parallel of God and Emperor in patristic literature, one comes across a significant problem in the translation of these writings. This problem can be narrowed down to exactly two terms: *ὁ οὐρανός* and *ὁ βασιλεύς*. While they represent firm connotations in Greek, they have no exact translation in English. For *ὁ οὐρανός* both 'heaven' and 'sky' offer themselves. It is unfortunate that, unlike most other European languages, English makes such a distinction. For each passage in translation a decision has to be made, as a uniform translation is impossible.

But it is *ὁ βασιλεύς* which must be considered as most important. This term occurs in almost every passage relevant to this study. It is usually translated as either 'king' or 'emperor' - another case where the translator decides for the ultimate reader the shade of meaning of a term. One should recall that '*basileus*' only became the official imperial title under Heraclius in the early seventh century. The sources used here employ '*basileus*' whether they speak of King David or Emperor Constantine or Emperor Julian or God in

Heaven. Thus, language in itself is no clear indication of special attention to imperial connotations, especially after having seen the Fathers' reservation about imperial terms.

Obviously, in an Old Testament context 'king' would be an acceptable translation. When one of the early Byzantine authors examined makes a contemporary reference, 'emperor' could be employed. Still, frequently metaphorical passages do not have such a determined environment. The most careful way to handle this term is probably to transliterate it. Connected terms, like *basilikon*, *basileia* and others are less harmful when translated as 'royal'. The reverse problem applies to the Greek for 'crown' – both *διάδημα* and *στέφανος* apply. The translations chosen were 'diadem' and 'crown' respectively. The distinction tries to mirror the fact that *στέφανος* was the usual Christian term for the crown of martyrdom.

The point is to employ the same translation for such critical terms right through the entire study, and not to sacrifice the accuracy of translation to its fluency. The counter-argument to this might be that also the Greek passages signal different shades of meaning, although the same term may be used. In passages as intricate as that, recourse will be had to quoting the original, not least in order to protect its content from imperfect translation. Very occasionally, a short, pungent passage is given entirely in the original, to let Chrysostom himself come through. On the whole and as far as possible, though, the method of uniform translation seems to me mandatory. Many passages on the 'heavenly court', the environment of God, are very similar in content - a few original descriptions and their mutations through generations of being quoted by various authors, plus these author's own versions and visions make for a finely patterned family tree. If the content is so similar, a clue to different origins or even just difference in some way may be provided by the terminology used. To keep trace of metaphors, their development and use throughout a lengthy period of time, it seems necessary to keep an accurate record of their language.

The Dating of Chrysostom's Works

The problems of dating, of chronology, and of authenticity form the darkest maze of Chrysostomology. Sadly, a study such as this, according such importance to Chrysostom's move from Antioch to Constantinople, depends on reasonably reliable dating of his works. Some experience with and insight into the problem is gained merely by handling the evidence on his court-heaven parallel, but to use these findings to in turn determine the date of a text would lead to a circular argument.

At times this seems an inevitable impasse, and as such is recognized by more experienced scholars of Chrysostom. Encouragement for this thesis can be drawn from R. E. Carter's remarks that 'in the future the more significant research into Chrysostom's language will be limited studies which help to establish criteria of authenticity which will help editors to choose between variant readings and which may - in the more distant future - provide norms for establishing the relative chronology of Chrysostom's works'.[1] The encouraging effect of this statement is somewhat undermined when he states two pages later that 'one should...not undertake...projects which depend on such studies as, for example, the relative chronology of Chrysostom's works'.

As a conscientious scholar, one feels the only solution is to collate and establish the *status quo* in the dating of Chrysostom's texts before even looking at the particular evidence related to one's own study. But this, as inevitably is the case with all the spadework that remains to be done on Chrysostom, would rapidly grow to be a thesis in its own right. It would be a task of amazing complexity, involving different findings made by different scholars in different centres at different times, all apparently proceeding in near-complete isolation from each other.[2]

To arrive nevertheless at a working chronology which, while not irrevocably solving the problems of dating, allows us to proceed with the study itself, a

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[1] R.E. Carter, "The Future of Chrysostom Studies. Theology and Nachleben." *Studia Patristica* 10 (1970) p.19.

[2] Carter, *Chrysostom Studies*, p.15: 'work on editions and translations could be better coordinated'.

mixture of tactics has to be employed. On the one hand, one can note and accept the dating proposed by the latest edition of each work or cycle of works. This yields reliable results especially in the case of texts that have appeared in the 'Sources Chrétiennes', and in the case of isolated publications. For the host of individual homilies, the remarks of the 19th century editors should not be neglected, but in most cases some internal evidence - references made to typical features of either city - decides between Antioch and Constantinople, and sometimes a text straddles both periods.[3]

A difficult area are Chrysostom's commentaries on the Letters of St. Paul. Here one study offered itself, devoted to this particular chronological problem and discussing all internal and related evidence as well as collating opinions on dating that had been expressed to its date. This study is Max von Bonsdorff's *Zur Predigttätigkeit des Johannes Chrysostomus* from 1922. What makes it especially interesting for this thesis is that along with all other evidence Bonsdorff also uses Chrysostom's references to the *basileus* as an indicator of location and time. The danger here would be again that my argument becomes circular by proxy, as it were, but as these considerations form only a part of his very thorough reasoning, the adoption of his chronology seems permissible.

These methods yield acceptably firm dating on most works. Some, like the commentary on Acts, will probably always remain at the mercy of the instinct of the individual scholar. Some doubtful texts have tenuous links with undoubtedly authentic ones. Chrysostom mentions Job a lot in his homilies on I Corinthians, which could be a hint that it is contemporary with writing the elusive commentary on Job.[4] On others, the individual scholar will develop digressing opinions against the background of his special concerns with the texts, as may be seen in the further course of this thesis. Again, this seems permissible if checked against a sufficient amount of objectively dated evidence.

The same applies to questions of authenticity. On the whole, suspicions of inauthenticity will be voiced during the thesis in the appropriate chapters. But

[3] Chrysostom's remarks about the Olympic Games 'many of you have many times been spectators' - frequently seems to settle dating for Antioch! His commentary on Acts is a good example. Chapter II.6 is still in Antioch, Chrysostom mentions Peter's sojourn. And in I.5: PG.76 the Olympic Games are mentioned. Chapter III.3 is also still in Antioch. In principium Actorum II.6: PG51-52.86: BV.119. See p. 47.

[4] C I Corinth. 28.3-4: PG61.236-237: LF9.390

one example could be the homily 'In qua potestate'.[5] 'Chrysostom' describes Cherubim around a throne of sapphire, which is a term that never ever appeared in any undoubtedly authentic texts. Angels and Cherubim are also described atypically. The homily has generally been considered inauthentic; but these observations of the terminology that forms the subject of this thesis corroborate that verdict, which in turn points to the potential usefulness of such studies, as R.E. Carter envisaged. This homily might illustrate another phenomenon: maybe it was wrongly attributed to Chrysostom because he and this type of description of heaven were connected in people's minds? But I should emphasize here that in the main I limit myself to using texts that can be attributed to Chrysostom with reasonable certainty.

Everybody working on an aspect of Chrysostom will eventually come up with his own answer on some of the debated texts, an answer supported by the particular evidence yielded by his particular enquiry. My study is no exception – I observe trends in Chrysostom's attitude towards heaven and *basileis* in texts that are established as authentic beyond any doubt, and compare these with the evidence taken from texts whose authenticity or dating is subject to discussion. The next step would be to plot the conclusions gained from all the various individual studies, to exchange new findings and thus maybe arrive at an updated chronology of Chrysostom's works. The process outlined above will in the subsequent chapters be applied to a number of texts, some of which, like Chrysostom's commentary on Acts, are crucial to the argument.

It is to be hoped that in the end this study fulfils part of the need for detailed documentation of Chrysostom's linguistic and metaphorical habits, which in turn will lead to a much more enlightened interpretation and classification of his works . But a main ingredient in such documentations is an attention to exact terminology, especially when translating references and quotations.

The dating of Chrysostom's texts adopted for this thesis will be found in the approximate chronologies which precede Part II and Part III respectively. The texts are listed in chronological order, and the accepted date is given. This date usually reflects the findings of the most recent editor(s), and in some cases refers to specific studies. For some texts, a wider discussion can be found in the thesis itself as the problem of their dating arises. To present any

[5] In illud: In qua potestate 3-4: PG56.418: BX.606.

chronology of Chrysostom must be considered a hazardous undertaking, as it is bound to be outdated with virtually the next publication of any scholarship on Chrysostom. The reader is advised to keep this in mind, and to consider these chronologies purely as a temporary assistance.

Part I

The Context

1 Heaven and the *Basileus* in the Fourth Century Fathers

There will be more point to devoting this study to John Chrysostom's treatment of heaven and *basileus* when this examination of his texts is preceded by a survey of the attitudes towards these issues displayed by some of his predecessors and contemporaries. The starting point of this survey is a matter of course - the moment at which the traditional imperial cult was infused with a Christian meaning and *raison d' être*. Eusebius of Caesarea has always been considered the master builder of this ideological structure, although at the time no one could have foretold that his simple God-*basileus* parallel would henceforth haunt Byzantine self–conception.[1] But maybe the explanation of this success lies in the very simplicity of the Eusebian model. What Eusebius had to offer was not even that new. He merely was the first to lift a range of elements out of the context of either Christian or pagan political philosophy and fuse them. This fusion is most obvious in his 'Tricennial Orations' eulogizing Constantine, a text which is not only short and explicit, but has the added advantage of having been tested in public, of having been heard by Constantine himself.[2]

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[1]Eusebius's role is examined by N.H. Baynes, "Eusebius and the Christian Empire", *Annuaire de l'Institut de Philologie et d'Histoire Orientale* II (1934) (Mélanges Bidez) p.13-18. Both Eusebius and his relation to Constantine the Great, as well as Constantine the Great's relation to Christianity have been widely discussed – by A. Momigliano, "Pagan and Christian Historiography", *The Conflict between Paganism and Christianity in the Fourth Century*, ed. A. Momigliano, Oxford (1963) 1–16; F.E. Cranz, "Kingdom and Polity in Eusebius of Caesarea", *Harvard Theological Review* 45 (1952) 47-66; J.-M. Sansterre, "Eusèbe de Césarée et la Naissance de la Théorie 'Césaropapiste'", *Byzantion* 42 (1972) 131-195, to give but a few examples. T.D. Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius* (Cambridge Mass., 1981) p.265ff. compiles the very few occasions on which Constantine and Eusebius actually met or had contact. That Eusebius is so often seen as the mastermind of Constantine's Christian empire may be due to the fact that in his idealizing 'Life of Constantine', written *after* the emperor's death, he deliberately portrays himself as a close advisor of Constantine.

[2]H. A. Drake convincingly presents the circumstances of the delivery of the Orations in *In Praise of Constantine, A Historical Study and New Translation of Eusebius' Tricennial Orations* (University of California Press, 1976) Ch.III, p.40-43, Ch.IV, p.51-52. But there is a technical problem. What Heikel edits as 'Tricennial Orations' and Drake as 'In Praise of Constantine' really consists of two texts - the actual panegyric 'In Praise of Constantine' and a text that is more homiletic, 'On Christ's Sepulchre'. Drake argues that these two titles were two different compositions for two different occasions: the 'Praise' having been delivered at the Jubilee on 25th July 336 and the 'Sepulchre' at the dedication of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, built by Constantine, in Jerusalem on 17th September 335. But the two texts run together as 18 chapters under the name of 'Tricennial Orations'. The decisive change, which in my opinion is very obvious, of topic, style and terminology takes place with the 11th chapter. Drake, *Constantine*, p.30-45. Not surprisingly, I tend to quote from

There are some statements in the 'Tricennial Orations' that involve heaven and the *basileus* and how attributes of each are projected onto the other. There are only two passages, though, of coherent description of the close vicinity around the heavenly ruler – and, as we will see, there can even be problems involving the identity of this ruler. The context of the first excerpt is a description and celebration of the 'Supreme Sovereign':

> I.(1)...the Supreme Being, whose kingdom's throne is the vault of the heavens above, while the earth is the footstool for his feet...would that one were able adequately to envision Him, but light flashing forth about Him shields the sight of his divinity from all with the sacred sparkle of its rays. (2) Him celestial armies encircle and supernatural powers attend, acknowledging Him their master, lord, and sovereign. The infinite number of angels and choruses of holy spirits gaze upon His gleaming presence as if drawing nourishment from ever–flowing springs of light. All light, even the divine and intellectual category of incorporeal lights allotted the region above heaven, celebrate the Supreme Sovereign with the highest and most God–befitting hymns. But the great heaven that lies between us has been drawn as a dark curtain, shutting off those outside from those within the royal halls. And about this like torchbearers at the palace doors circle the sun and moon and heavenly lamps, glorifying the Sovereign who is Above the Universe and by His will and word hanging out for those allotted the darkness beyond the land of heaven inextinguishable lamps of light.
> **Ch. I, 1-2; Drake p.84; Heikel 196.19–197.6**

Out of this several *topoi* can be isolated which will recur throughout the thesis. There is a very cosmological description of God's environment, equating parts of the cosmos with the central props of the earthly court. Then we find this cosmological description combined with the element of light. The apparent division of the cosmos is combined with the image of the palace - the curtain divides the masses from the throne-room. All this is a clear projection of earthly court conditions onto the heavenly plane. The theme of division - which had also appeared in Verse 4 of the Prologue - is reminiscent of the description of the tabernacle as the model, the *typos*, for the universe in Exodus.[3]

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the original panegyric only. - In view of n.1, one should not assume that Constantine and Eusebius worked out ideological points together, but on the other hand it can be presumed that on such a very public occasion as the 'Tricennial Orations' Eusebius exhibited ideas which he knew would meet with Constantine's approval.

[3] Exodus 25.6-27.21 And with hindsight one could just mention how Cosmas Indicopleustes in the 6th century built his entire 'Christian Topography' on the tabernacle, as he set out in chapters 5 and 6 of his introduction. W. Wolska–Conus, *Cosmas Indicopleustés - La Topographie Chrétienne I, Livres I-IV*, Sources Chrétiennes 141, p.267.

The metaphor runs on, involving the palace as its model: the celestial bodies take on the same role as the torchbearers illuminating the approaches to the palace. Reapplying this passage to the earthly palace, from which the simile of the torchbearers had been taken in the first place, this would mean that the imperial court, now turning Christian, becomes a guiding centre also for other nations unlucky enough not to be in the Empire.[4] This interpretation of the metaphor in two directions simultaneously is legitimized here by the nature of the text. The 'Tricennial Orations' eulogize God and heaven on the one hand and Constantine and his court on the other, and each is employed to illustrate the other, thereby emphasizing also their affinity.

But the other prominent *topos* of 'light' is different. God cannot be beheld because of the blinding light surrounding him, and his attendants take their existence from this light. To describe God as 'light' is a thoroughly Christian concept. The pagan repertoire of panegyric knows the handsome and dazzling *basileus* on a lifesize scale.[5] But 'light' only appears in later panegyrics. Corippus uses it repeatedly in his panegyric on Justin II's accession.[6] The celestial armies and supernatural powers attending the Supreme Sovereign point to an imperial context, but are of course among the oldest biblical images to describe divine environment. The same applies to 'hymns', but added to the biblical tradition is the also religious pagan imperial cult - the palace itself had a sacral nature which only had to be switched from a pagan to a Christian meaning.

If this passage introduced the elements that can give a metaphor a palatine flavour, there are other excerpts that look more closely at the definitions and functions of the figures involved, and at the idea of government. In III.6 Eusebius concentrates on Constantine modelling himself on the Supreme Sovereign and his kingship. He also equates the evils of pagan polytheism with those of anarchic polyarchy, which of course underlines the probability of divine dispensation as the Christians describe it: the One God chooses the

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[4] T.D. Barnes, "Constantine and the Christians of Persia", *Journal of Roman Studies* 75 (1985) 126-136, p.130-32 analyses Constantine's personal letter to Shapur (Eusebius, *Life of Constantine* 4.9ff.), which is a real illustration of this ideological point. Constantine there develops an image of the superior ruler who follows God's intentions, thus both attracting and being responsible for all humans who also want to live according to God.

[5] W.S. Maguinness, "Some Methods of the Latin Panegyrists", *Hermathena* 47 (1932) 42-61, L.K. Born, "The Perfect Prince according to the Latin Panegyrics", *American Journal of Philology* 55 (1934) 20-35

[6] *F.C. Corippus – In Laudem Justini Augusti Minoris,* ed. + transl. Averil Cameron (London, 1976), Book I, p.47; Book II, p.49, 50, 52, 56: Book III, p.65, 67. Light is used always in connection with the emperor or members of his family.

One *Basileus*. Eusebius illustrates this link with a description of God's environment. Ironically, this description uses the same terminology employed later in V.6 scornfully to negate imperial courtly glitter:

> There is one Sovereign, and His Logos and royal law is one, not expressed in words or syllables, nor eroded by time in books or tables, but the living and actual God the Logos, who directs His Father's kingdom for all those under and beneath Him. Heavenly armies encircle Him...including...those invisible spirits within heaven who see to the order of the whole cosmos - over all of whom the royal Logos takes precedence as a kind of prefect of the Supreme Sovereign...
> **Ch. III.6; Drake p.87; Heikel 201.26-202.2**

The analogy with Constantine's earthly court and accessories of rule, which as ideal prince he is encouraged to scorn in Ch.V, is so obvious that it does not need to be pointed out. Why are such details as attendants and armies not negated on the divine level, too? The apparent contradiction can be explained again with the fact that this text is not simply an imperial panegyric. Eusebius' work is a double eulogy to Constantine and to God. Above, it has been seen how those two elements are used to describe each other. Here, a difficulty becomes apparent: it is not easy to do justice to the powers of the one - God - withoput invariably limiting the possibilities of the other - the emperor. The two subjects of the 'Tricennial Orations' are not equal after all. Thus the text divides itself into panegyrical ekphrasis of God's heavenly environment with its own terms and standards, and a propaganda piece for Constantine, half educating, half extolling, also on its own terms. 'Education' is the keyword here - in Ch.V.5-6 Eusebius describes imperial pomp and the *basileus*' evident enjoyment of power, armies and props as necessary to suit the taste of the people - but he warns the *basileus* against becoming overfond of such accoutrements. And one could apply the same here: the environment of God is described as a court, inclusive of 'invisible spirits' whose task seems to be comparable to that of countless imperial officials and clerks, in order to be more comprehensible to 'the people'. In addition to these versions of 'heaven' there briefly appears another one in the 'Orations': in Ch. VI.18-19 and Ch.VII.10 the 'Kingdom of Heaven' is described in terms of the afterlife, as an abstract space populated by angelic choirs and with no connections with either the cosmological or the palatine heaven.

The conclusion must be that one can find in Eusebius' 'Tricennial Orations' a line of projection and identification back and forth between the figures of God and the *basileus* in their respective immediate environments. This text is unusual in that it is based on special circumstances. But both its content and

its context make it specially interesting for later readers who might find in it a blueprint for imperial ideology. Whether a direct identification of God with the emperor was intended by Eusebius is difficult to decide. It is also perhaps questionable, at least where the heavenly level is concerned, to apply the term 'court' to the description and enumeration of who or what populated the close environment around a central figure. The combination of heavenly and earthly elements is not consistent, there is no fixed scheme. There is no explicit boundary between Heavenly Kingdom as an actual place or setting and as a state of the soul or even as the afterlife and one should imagine the difficulty for someone just listening to these statements in keeping such issues apart. The heavenly court as a pronounced concept does not exist. Rather, it emerges out of the attempt to put certain Christian concepts of good rule and of the existence and purpose of God's supremacy on a level where an earthly ruler can identify with it. If Eusebius does come over as the midwife of an image, this impression must largely be confined to this text, for in other circumstances he expressed a tenet that the Christian should not need any images or models because he contemplates God in his heart.[7]

But as it happened, the images evolved by Eusebius in the frame of a few pages were destined to reappear in the texts of his successors throughout the century. Special allowances were made by Eusebius for conditions peculiar to Constantine - his sons, the main events of his career are all woven into the fabric of this equation. These details, of course, cannot hold for subsequent writers and rulers, but the basic parallel fits the Christian empire as such. What happens to it? And if these purpose-built identifications appeared in different circumstances,were they true descendants of Eusebius' ideas or did they merely look the same?

A good check in this respect is offered in the figure of Athanasius of Alexandria, who could not be farther removed from Eusebius as regards his relation to the imperial court and the conditions that gave rise to his writings. Where Eusebius retrospectively liked to present himself as an important imperial favourite, Athanasius was estranged from imperial power, the victim of dogmatic struggles in which emperors took sides. But, again, while Eusebius was far from the court for most of his life, Athanasius by

[7] This was contained in his answer to Constantia Augusta's request for an image of Christ, analysed by G. Florovsky, "Origen, Eusebius and the Iconoclast Controversy", *Church History* 19 (1950) 77-96.

comparison probably had more actual contact with it through his regular appeals and his sojourn with Constans.[8]

These conditions make a certain difference obvious - Eusebius' panegyric is about to be checked against the dogmatic texts of Athanasius written when the Arian controversy was mounting to its apex. Therefore Athanasius' argument must aim at a firm separation of the human and the divine in all respects except where the two elements come together in the incarnate Word. While Eusebius introduces his audience to an imagined, purpose-built heaven, Athanasius pays heed to the tension between a cosmological reality of heaven and a spiritual concept. The reader must emulate this care and differentiate between statements made by Athanasius and statements that happen to be included in quotes he takes from other sources. While in some of his writings his argument is catechetical to an extremely high degree, as in the 'Orations against the Arians' and his apologies, in his treatise 'Against the Pagans' he also draws on Platonist authors, and in the 'Life of Antony' he compiles a narrative from reports and descriptions. Any argument that if Athanasius quotes some statements, he therefore also identifies with them, is dangerous. He can agree with the message of a quote while he himself would have phrased it differently.

Imagery has a limited significance with Athanasius. He does not grant it the political dimension that Eusebius applies in his 'Tricennial Orations'. He frequently makes clear that a comparison between the earthly and the heavenly is a help to understanding, and does not express a fact.[9] He uses '*basileus*' interchangeably both for God and for the earthly ruler, but he emphasizes that divine and human elements should not be used in defining each other or describing each other's properties other than in a didactic example labelled as such .[10] Thus, if there was a detailed description of God's environment in the terms of an imperial court in Athanasius' work, it would have to count as a purely literary metaphor:

> ...for in the Son one sees the divinity of the Father...But this one will find easier to understand with the example of the image of the *basileus*.

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[8] I am grateful to Dr. Michael Whitby for alerting me to this particular circumstance. Athanasius' views of the empire are explored in detail by L.W. Barnard, "Athanasius and the Roman State", *Latomus* 36 (1977) 422-437.

[9] Against the Pagans Ch.43, ed. + transl. R.W. Thomson, *Athanasius - Contra Gentes et de Incarnatione* (Oxford, 1971) p.119: 'if the parallel is feeble, yet one must understand it in a more comprehensive way'.

[10] Epistle in Defence of the Nicene Council 10: PG 25.433, transl. *Select Treatises of St. Athanasius in Controversy with Arians* (Oxford, 1877)

> The image shows the figure and the face of the *basileus*, and in the *basileus* one finds the figure shown in the image. For the complete likeness shows the image of the *basileus* so that whoever contemplates the image sees the *basileus* within it, and whoever in turn sees the *basileus*, recognizes him from the image. But because of this complete likeness the image could answer to the demand to see the *basileus* after his image: 'I and the *basileus* are one thing, for I am in him, and he is in me...' thus he who adores the image also adores the *basileus*....
> **Orations against the Arians 3.5: PG26.329**

The earthly *basileus* and his image is purely used as an example, a special and intended parallel to God is not expressed. Outside such illustrative examples, neither the appearance of God, nor that of an emperor are described. God is light, not in the sense of splendour around a person, but by definition. Neither does there seem to be a biblical cosmic description of a heavenly throne with the earth as a footstool. 'Throne' rather signifies a unit of heavenly power. God and Christ are described as ruling, surrounded by heavenly beings serving them according to old biblical images which Athanasius does not link with the imperial environment. Also, the 'created spirits' do not exhibit a clear hierarchical stratification. Most importantly, in addressing the emperor directly, and stating that he was granted the empire by the grace of God a parallel between earthly imperial and divine rule is not drawn.[11] This is emphasized by - however few - extensive acclamations accorded to God in contrast to more monosyllabic addresses to the emperor: simply '*basileus*' in the vocative for example in Ch. 3 of the same Apology to the Emperor Constantine.[12] The emperor is reminded of his heavy responsibility and is advised to emulate the guidelines for rulers contained in scripture and to listen to orthodox (!) Christian advisors - all of which makes him a Christian with a special task rather than a special Christian in the Eusebian mould.[13]

Athanasius' heaven, then, is like his God. God can be, and is, everywhere - on earth, in man's soul, 'outside it all'.[14] The same applies to heaven - man can contemplate it while still on earth, it can be a state of his soul. There is only one slightly defined sphere - and that is where the heavenly beings

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[11] 'Almighty Lord, eternal basileus, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, it is you who, by your word, has given this empire to your servant Constantius, enlighten his heart yourself...' Apology to the Emperor Constantine Ch.12, J.-M. Szymusiak, *Athanase d'Alexandrie: Apologie à l'Empereur Constance – Apologie pour sa Fuite*, SC 56 (1958) p.100.

[12] SC 56.91

[13] Corresponding passages are found in both apologies. Apology to the Emperor Constantine Ch.3, p.91; Ch.10, p.98; Ch. 12, p.100; Ch.17, p.106; Ch.26, p.117; Ch.35, p.131. Apology for his Flight Ch.1, p.133; Ch.9, p.142, all SC 56 (1958).

[14] De Incarnatione Ch.8, R.W. Thomson, *Athanasius – Contra Gentes et De Incarnatione* (Oxford 1971) p.153.

assemble, somewhere between the states of heaven and earth.[15] This sphere can with some imagination evolve into something like God's throne-room, but Athanasius does not take this step. His heaven is thoroughly spiritualized and too abstract, too devoid of anthropomorphic elements to allow that. This leads to the consideration that in order to accept or to form an ideology involving a parallel between a heavenly court and the earthly imperial court, one should be prepared to accept a humanoid heaven.

In contrast, Basil of Caesarea is a consistent, and avid user of metaphor. He suits it to the different literary genres he works in (letters, sermons, treatises), adapting to different audiences, but generally using the same image for the same purposes. For him metaphor can be a rhetorical trick - he likes to open a sermon with a lengthy and picturesque simile on roughly the same level of seriousness and intensity as the subject matter he wants to illustrate. He therefore presents a finely graded and very sensitive stratigraphy in his metaphorical habits. From this clarity and deftness with which he employs metaphors throughout his writings one may conclude that this is an entirely conscious process.

How does he use metaphor in connection with the *basileus* and heaven? He divides earthly and heavenly matters into two different levels of reality: 'Effectively one says that there are two realities, divinity on the one hand and creation on the other'.[16] So there is no contradiction between describing the universe in cosmological terms – as Basil does in the 'Hexaemeron'– and describing a heaven with all its fittings and occupants which does not find a 'real' place in the cosmological system.[17] There are, for example, angels that are put at the head of nations, and others looking after individuals, and Basil quotes Deut. 32.8: '...He fixes the limits of the nations according to the number of his angels'.[18] The two heavens do not impinge on each other's kind of reality, Basil is capable of sustaining a comprehensive physical, scientific cosmology without contradicting the existence and nature of a spiritual heaven.[19] He also describes this spiritual heaven. Its main occupants

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15 Consecutive passages on heaven are found in the Letters to Serapion No. 1, Ch. 14,18,20,26,27: PG26.564-593; No.3 Ch.4: PG26.629-632; No.4 Ch.23: PG 26.676.

16 Against Eunomius III.2, ed. + transl. B. Sesbouée, *Basile de Césarée - Contre Eunome II, suivi de Eunome - Apologie*, SC 305 (1983) p.151-153.

17 S. Giet, *Basile de Césarée - Homélies sur l'Hexaéméron*, SC 26 (1943)

18 Against Eunomius III.1: SC 305.149.

19 Also G. Kustas, "St. Basil and the Rhetorical Tradition", *Basil of Caesarea - Christian, Humanist, Ascetic*, ed. P.J. Fedwick, Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, Toronto

are heavenly beings, angels and souls. Again it is consistent that Basil, while using terms connected with human objects, never uses these objects themselves in a direct projection onto the heavenly plane.[20] Also, he speaks of armies and choirs of angels to describe their number and perhaps to an extent their appearance - in rank and file.[21] As regards a throne, he on at least one occasion explains: 'sitting' simply means being stable, an interpretation of 'throne' common amongst Church Fathers.[22] Thus, also when heavenly Jerusalem is mentioned Basil refrains from any closer description and gives the impression of a city defined as a communal entity rather than by mythical houses and palaces in a parallel to Constantinople, which came to be seen as the New Jerusalem in the 5th century.[23] When Basil does use actual description, one finds that he employs for the most part pure biblical quotations. Nevertheless, he presents these quotes usually as a reality, and apparently not just as an allegorical language, and that is the most reassuring outcome of examining his writings - that a heavenly environment around God including spiritual beings of various description in some form of hierarchy does exist. In this he is much less abstract than Athanasius. He is also distinguished from Eusebius by this clarity with which he keeps cosmological, purely spiritual, Christological, theological and 'heavenly' issues apart. As has been said, each is treated on its own level of reality. But: a consistent, pronounced link of his heaven with the court, task, environment of the emperor is something that Basil does not often provide us with, except in the by now familiar figure of the angels. In one passage on heavenly beings 'attendants' appear for which the same term is used as for persons serving in a public official position (*λειτουργούντων*). Basil even stresses that they do their duty properly - it is not very far fetched to think of government officials in the huge machinery of Byzantine bureaucracy.[24] Basil also upholds the ideal of secular offices being bestowed by God and therefore being invested with a more than worldly responsibility - this concept he exhibits in many a scathing letter to imperial officials on some provincial business.[25]

(1981) I, 231 considers that Basil 'assigns to the angelic world...a kind of spiritualized materiality.'

[20] Homilies on the Hexaemeron 3.9: SC 26.237-9.

[21] *e.g.* Homily 'Exhortation to Baptism' 8, PG 31.441-444. In Against Eunomius III.1 angels are described as having charge of different nations - SC 305.149.

[22] About the Holy Spirit Ch.15, ed. + transl. B. Pruche, *Basile de Césarée - Traité du Saint-Ésprit*, SC 17 (1945) p.131.

[23] Homilies on the Hexaemeron 6.1: SC 26.327.

[24] About the Holy Spirit 38: SC 17.180.

[25] R. Deferrari, *Basil of Caesarea - The Letters*, vol. I-IV (Loeb Classical Library 1926). Letter 83 To a Censitor, vol.II p.101; Letter 109 To Count Helladius, vol.II p.210; Letter

So although he has an active, populated heaven alongside an intellectually defined universe, and also uses terms connected with human institutions to describe heaven, Basil never uses these institutions themselves in a direct projection. And although many of the most descriptive passages in Basil are biblical quotations, they nevertheless represent reality.

Although he is Basil's bosom friend, Gregory of Nazianzus differs widely in his evaluation of things heavenly. It is difficult to isolate relevant statements from the profusion of rhetorical devices that turn his homilies into an intellectual *tour de force*. They are exercises of analysis and definition, in a rhythm of detailed key questions and puzzle–piece answers building up to a coherent conclusion. In contrast to the buoyant faith of Basil, Gregory himself seems rarely able to free himself from the machinery of reason. He seemingly finds it difficult to accept more than one level of reality. It is maybe such a basic reluctance – or inability – to move onto a spiritual plane that explains the relatively small amount of descriptive material relating to a heavenly court that can be gleaned from his texts.

Gregory does use established - that mostly means biblical - iconographic descriptions of heaven. But they are subject to constant challenge. When the discussion of the spiritual level is the main theme, Gregory just as much uses his own, more abstract definitions. When this is the case Gregory bridges the gap between the earthly and the heavenly in a single step by the means of thought and argument, while Basil describes a smooth ascent passing through different stages of spiritual elation.[26]

Gregory's abruptness leads to an interesting pattern. Instead of lyrical descriptions he often seems to rely on key words, expressions of conventional iconography, apparently intended to trigger off the pictorial background in the listener's mind while Gregory carries on with his unconventional and abstract discussion. This economical use of imagery indicates that certain words must have had such powerful associations for the general Christian public, and that

313 To an Assessor of Taxes, vol.III p.251. The state as a natural organism is also described in the 'bee-metaphor', Homilies on the Hexaemeron 8.4: SC26.448, where Basil draws attention to the fact that the basileus of the bees draws his authority from natural superiority, not from dynastic precedence. The basileus of the bees is a model ruler, also as regards the purely defensive mechanism of his body - bees do not know aggressive action.

[26] For Basil, see About Faith 1: PG31.464–5. For Gregory, 28th Oration (2nd Theological) Ch.28, ed. + transl. P. Gallay, *Grégoire de Nazianze - Discours 27-31 (Discours Théologiques)*, SC 250 (1978) p.163.

Gregory knew of the effect he could achieve. It is important to think of the listener in this connection. Gregory knows that he uses terms like heavenly armies, throne and so on as embellishment, as a dangerous translation into human terms, and that what he himself identifies with are his own totally a-pictorial theological definitions. In one passage he gives a whole list of translations of human attributes applied to God, '...an image taken from our environment', and resigns himself to the pedagogical necessity of using these terms.[27] But the contemporary listener or indeed reader, rather than making this distinction, is much more likely to reconstruct a consistent image. Therefore Gregory is an unquestionable carrier of some established iconography that can serve to furnish a heavenly court on imperial lines (armies, choirs, ranks, attendants serving) even if he does not emphasize it. This effect is intensified by the fact that Gregory firmly supports earthly hierarchical order and good emperorship, joining the other Fathers in condemning anarchy and polyarchy.[28]

But there is one concept of his that actually adds to this iconography, and that is his idea of heaven as a halfway-house between earth and God, although he does not like this material image. In the 6th Oration (First about Peace), Ch. 22 Gregory speaks of a first division separating the angels from divinity, and a second division separating mankind from the heavens.[29] One must remember that Gregory considers angels to be spirits, but as they are created, they cannot be completely a-physical. Rather they take the determination of their place and their direction from the totally spiritual divinity.[30] In another passage Gregory is a little clearer:

> If...the divinity is above everything, is there nothing separating it from this 'everything'? And how can be conceived that which ascends above and that which is lifted above, there being no boundary whatsoever to limit and separate it? Is it not necessary that there is something between, delineating the all and the above–all? And what else can that be but a place – what we tried to avoid all the time?
> **28th Oration 10: SC 250.121**

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[27] 31st Oration 22: SC 250.317-9.

[28] 2nd Oration Ch.4 and 4th Oration Ch.64, aimed against Julian and praising his immediate predecessors. Ed. + transl. J. Bernardi, *Grégoire de Nazianze – Discours 1-3*, SC 247,1978, p.91-3 and p.173. But then again in the 20th Oration Ch.4, ed. + transl. J. Mossay, *Grégoire de Nazianze – Discours 20-23*, SC 270, 1980, p.65: 'As long as one of us still bears authority...and is in the service of the emperor, he must say "I am not worthy to enter under your roof."'

[29] PG35.751.

[30] 38th Oration 9: PG36.320-321, discussed by R. Ruether, *Gregory of Nazianzus* (Oxford, 1969) p.131ff.

The image that emerges from these passages has the difficulty that if God does not form the focus of heaven, but is so very far above it, this heaven is lacking the centre essential to a court. But as a mirror image it could possibly be applied to the imperial court with a continuously elevated emperor, and naturally the elevation of the emperor - both as a state and as a process - always appears in ceremonial.[31] Less exotically, it might have an influence on the distance between even the top court officials and their employer.

There is one element of heaven and earth that Gregory spends some time on - the relationship between Jerusalem, the heavenly Jerusalem, and Constantinople, most poignantly of course in his 36th Oration 'About himself and those who said he wanted the Patriarchate', for example in Ch.12.[32] On the other hand, one has to note that Gregory of Nazianzus does not describe these spheres or spaces outside earthly tangibility any more closely. The task of imagining them is once more left to the audience. The most important feature about Gregory of Nazianzus is probably this role of the audience (that means both listeners and readers). For they decide what they will remember of his references to heaven - the conventional imagery or his abstract definitions - or whether they substitute his ambivalence with their own imagination.

Gregory of Nyssa is not quite so enigmatic, but he is maybe the most diverse and fascinating of the Cappadocians. The evidence is convincing that he experienced a variety of lifestyles apart from asceticism.[33] This fits in with the observation that he does not chastize his flock as devastatingly as the other Cappadocians. He seems to see himself as another Christian on the way, in solidarity with his parish. It would be interesting to see whether the note of reconciliation running through his works applies also to his concept of heaven, and to his view of the imperial court. But in the event, he does not

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31 There are examples from the fourth century. Ammianus describes the *adventus* of Constantius in Rome. The emperor appeared to sit so high in his carriage that he had to incline his head beneath lofty archways - Ammianus 16.10.7-9. Ammianus also describes how at his coronation in 360 Julian was elevated on a shield - Ammianus 29.5.20. O. Treitinger, *Die oströmische Kaiser- und Reichsidee nach ihrer Gestaltung im höfischen Zeremoniell* (Bad Homburg, 1969) p.22, notes that this was a military form of coronation since Julian. Later: Liudprandi Antapodosis VI.5, ed. J. Becker, *Die Werke Liudprands von Cremona*, Scriptores Rerum Germanicarum (Hannover+Leipzig, 1915), p.154-155.

32 ed. C. Moreschini , transl. P. Gallay, *Discours* 32-37, SC 318 (1985) p.269.

33 A 'marriage' can be assumed and M. Aubineau in his edition of *Traité de la Virginité*, SC 119 (1966) p.65-65 sets out the evidence. In Ch.3 of that treatise Gregory wistfully describes how the joys of virginity are lost to him forever. Aubineau also introduces the letter of condolence from Gregory of Nazianzus to Nyssa upon the death of his 'companion' Theosebia in 385. There is even the very remote possibility of a son (p.71-76).

appear to add any new notions. Rather, he economizes with pictorial detail. There is a prevailing interest in cosmic realities, which is most obvious in his treatise 'About the Lord's Prayer'.[34] But frequently these excursions are not linked with any discussion of 'heaven' as a place or a concept. Heavenly choirs, armies, thrones, ranks make but a fleeting appearance. The lengthiest description is delivered only accompanied by an explanatory commentary - stating that the royal terms used in such descriptions are chosen from human life in order to make us understand, but that they do not describe actual things and merely want to signify a similar pattern. Earthly royal terminology is to be used as a language only, as circumscription of the inexpressible, and royal terms are only used for comparison because they happen to be expressive of what is considered by humans the most elevated condition possible on earth, not necessarily because of any value of this condition. No real identification between earthly and heavenly condition is to be supposed.[35]

The assumption that this is Gregory's general attitude is corroborated by frequent statements to the effect that the divine should not be pulled down to a profane level by comparisons with human properties and conditions.[36] All this analyses Gregory's attitude. But the question is to what extent the audience grasped this attitude behind the use of a well-worn terminology which would, as in the case of Nazianzus, probably spark off quite generalized images in the mind of the average listener. Who would listen to the qualifications?[37] One wonders whether Gregory's qualification of imperial jargon in its application to the heavenly is discerned and adopted. Of the 4th century authors, Gregory of Nyssa is probably the most subtle and most elusive in the differentiation between application of terms and application of properties.

This impression is supported by Gregory's finely graded general use of metaphors. On the one hand, his literary metaphors are not remote, but taken from an everyday context - even if they are late antique staples (like medical metaphors) he lends them a new, refreshing taste of reality.[38] On the other hand, he sees the imagery he finds in sources, above all the Bible, as 'allegorical', that is as something that is not real but speaks in a convenient

[34] PG44.1119-1194.

[35] Homilies about the Eight Blessings 1.1: PG44.1193-5.

[36] About the Lord's Prayer 1.5: PG44.1132; Catechism 2: PG45.17.

[37] Catechism 18.2: PG45.53-54. Conversation with Macrina 9.1: PG46.68 - here it is stated that 'Hades' is 'just a word'.

[38] About the Eight Blessings 4, Intro.- Ch.2: PG44.1194-1197.

language understandable by humans, and it is his task to find a key and provide a translation of this language. 'Reality' for Gregory of Nyssa seems to be something either as tangible as his pen on an earthly level or as abstract and disembodied as pure maths on an un-earthly level. The best proof that his attitude is more complicated than and different from simply projecting contained images to and from fixed and defined levels is the fact that often in the course of analysis his works have to be discussed in their entirety, because it is impossible to separate evidence for this enquiry in the word-by-word or paragraph fashion which worked reasonably well for the other 4th century authors so far.[39]

The conflicting trends in Gregory of Nyssa's writings are maybe best both illustrated and summed up by a discussion of a shorter text from the middle period of his activity - 'The Creation of Man' from 379.[40] One does not find descriptions of a heavenly environment in this text. But it is still interesting because it discusses concepts which are also important – and vitally so – for the construction of a heavenly court. Also, the much older idea of the royalty of man is exploited to a surprising degree. The content of the text falls into three main fields. Firstly, there is a description of cosmos and its role. From the major components of the earth - heaven, earth, air, water – Gregory moves to minor details – like summits, herbs, rivers – and describes this universe as the prepared palace for the *basileus* to rule over it all. That *basileus* is man, which is why man comes last in creation. Heaven has none but a cosmic significance. Secondly, Gregory enlarges on this royalty and its source, building up the image–prototype relationship between man and God. Man receives his royalty from the greatest *basileus*, but although man is given a palace, God is not. But, thirdly, Gregory instead moves onto a bigger concept, the Kingdom of God, the afterlife, paradise. One meets the familiar image of men and women becoming angels and joining the incorporeal beings after resurrection. The 'Kingdom' hence seems to describe the free afterlife rather than a state of the soul as encountered in Athanasius.

Taking such a text as a whole helps, I hope, to illustrate the cohesion of all the different issues contained in the concept of heaven, and its expression by

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[39] A case in point is his 'Life of Moses', with the discussions on both the biblical, imaginary and an abstract, spiritual level. PG44.298-434. Transl. A. Malherbe and E. Ferguson, *Gregory of Nyssa – The Life of Moses*, Classics of Western Spirituality, 1978. Another example is the 6th of his Homilies about the Eight Blessings, PG44.1264-1277, in which Gregory intricately discusses the problem of human beings 'beholding God'.

[40] J. Laplace, J. Daniélou, *Grégoire de Nysse – La Création de l'Homme*, SC6, 1943. PG44.123-258.

attributes of earthly kingship. But the question must be, again and as always, to what extent the audience appreciated Gregory's delicate treatment of these issues. He makes his points much clearer than Gregory of Nazianzus. However, the thought remains whether these nuances between the 4th century Fathers were not lost on the average 4th century churchgoer. On the other hand, the churchgoer is but one recipient, while the longer term impact of images and their use is equally important as it may influence later preachers and writers.

This leads back to the problems of considering the Cappadocian Fathers as a group. They all differ in their attitude to heaven, which reflects their individual personalities, and their personal faith. Basil of Caesarea is hardly haunted by religious doubts, has a firm and positive faith, describes it as easy to soar above worldly problems and to go for a spiritual walk in heaven,[41] delighting in its attractions and accoutrements.[42] Gregory of Nazianzus, on the other hand, rarely takes this step, and many of his statements are concerned with personal depressions and inhibitions.[43] Gregory of Nyssa is maybe both the most worldly and the most profound of the group and fills his sermons with a humane warmth, at the same time not jeopardizing their intellectual calibre and theological content.

But it is also clear that the Cappadocians do form a distinct group. Eusebius stands on his own, not least because the discussion limited itself to his courtly 'Tricennial Orations'. Athanasius of Alexandria is a lone fighter for the correct faith, therefore fanatical in his opinions, he can be identified with the period of dogmatic fighting that culminated around the middle of the 4th century, and which in many respects - not least that of its tenacity - might be explained out of the geographical isolation of both himself and his local enemies. The Cappadocians are different. They are relatively 'new', mostly first-generation Christians, they all come from rich families, they are friends, fellow students, even brothers. Over significant stretches, they build up their faith together. Their faith, their jobs and, to a degree, their lifestyle are Christian. However, their method of thinking, their way of finding proofs for faith, their habit of watching their own personality, their style of writing is essentially

41 About Faith 1: PG31.464.

42 'Orderly movement, it cannot be said too often, is what excites the Basilian mind' - G.L. Kustas, *Basil*, p.243.

43 This aspect of Gregory's works is explored by H.-G. Beck, "Rede als Kunstwerk und Bekenntnis. Gregor von Nazianz." *Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-Historische Klasse, Sitzungsberichte* (1977) Heft 4, 1-32.

classicising, even in descriptions of heaven their pagan rhetorical training is never spiritualized away.[44]

It is also in this respect that John Chrysostom belongs to a new age, leaving classical habits of thought, reasoning and self-conception behind. Unlike the Cappadocians, he does not say much about himself, he barely speaks about matters of life in general, his whole outlook is solely focused on the interpretation of scripture and bringing it to his flock, together with good Christian demeanour. Also his letters are different - they have no stylish introduction, but are direct, to the point, and not intimate, but remain on the plane of shared faith only. These characteristics appear throughout his great legacy of texts. It is perhaps also this wealth of material which accounts for the greater variety of references to the court-heaven parallel. But maybe another major explanation of this variety is Chrysostom's prolonged exposure to imperial environments, as I mentioned - Antioch, his birthplace, had over long periods been an imperial residence, also in his lifetime, and Constantinople was the capital.

This brief preview of Chrysostom draws attention to the fact that I seem to be discussing the Fathers' attitude to heaven more expansively than their attitude to imperial reality. At the same time, I attribute importance to the fact that they use imperial ideology in their description of heaven. To turn to the first part of the problem: one may recall that in these men's time there took place the reign of Julian the Apostate, with his attempted reversal of the religion of the empire to paganism. The reactions shown by the Cappadocians display an odd mixture of a reawakened sense of insecurity - theirs was the first generation of Christians that had not been persecuted so far - and a surprising outbreak of fanatic hate, seeing the role of Christianity as it had been achieved under Constantine as an untouchable prerogative, simply because that supposedly was the role God had predestined Christianity for. There is another characteristic , one that will prevail also in times of good Christian emperors: an emperor is completely at the mercy of the judgement of the leading Christians, something that is already apparent in Eusebius' ideology, however well he camouflaged it. In the light of all this Julian is seen as a regrettable lapse against the better knowledge of the Christian community. And under these circumstances, although the idea of 'empire' is seen as a misused, but

[44] How much less 'Greek' Athanasius is in comparison with the Cappadocian Fathers is stated also by K.G. Bonis, "Basilius von Caesarea und die Organisation der christlichen Kirche im 4. Jahrhundert", *Basil of Caesarea – Christian, Humanist, Ascetic*, ed. P.J. Fedwick, Pontifical Instituite of Mediaeval Studies (Toronto, 1981), Part I, p. 286

basically good thing, the evil of Julian's pagan person filling the post pushes the idea of 'emperor' back into the negative evaluation it had during the persecutions, standing for all that was against Christianity.

This situation explains the comparative lack of evidence referring to their imperial court, although one must on the other hand not forget just how provincially isolated the Cappadocians were. Gregory of Nazianzus, who spent a short time as Patriarch of Constantinople, left his post in disgust. Gregory of Nyssa visited Constantinople for the 2nd Ecumenical Council and returned later for short visits to the court. The contact of the Cappadocians with matters imperial was limited for the most part to bureaucratic affairs and contretemps with the provincial governors in question, involving nothing to give rise to courtly imagery. In any case their impressions of imperial reality do not seem to be mixed with their theoretical attitude to imperial rule, and this attitude is summed up in the following quote from Nazianzus, who had the grace and prudence to resign from the bishopric of Constantinople against mounting pressure:

> Emperors, respect your purple - for our Word will pass laws even on legislators. Know what important mission has been entrusted to you and what the great mystery is concerning you: the entire world is in your hand, a small tiara and a bit of fabric master it. The things on high are only for God, those down here are also for you. Be gods for your subjects, to use a risky expression. May your power lie there, and not in gold or in armies.
> You who are courtiers and surround the throne, do not be exalted beyond the measures of your power and do not concoct any projects of immortality for things which are not immortal. Remain faithful to the emperors, but above all to God...
> **36th Oration, About himself and those who said he wanted to be archbishop, Ch.11** [45]

If anything, this chapter shows what a delicate matter it is to follow the career of an image. All these authors use the God-*basileus* parallel, some very sparingly, some more frequently, but always hedged in with severe qualifications. Some interpretations and precautions are voiced by all – except by Eusebius himself. What maybe became most apparent is just how much lies with the beholder, with the audience, who has to decide with each statement where the joint is between real meaning and identification on the one hand and mere example and illustration on the other. This is complicated by

[45] ed. C. Moreschini, transl. P. Gallay, *Grégoire de Nazianze – Discours 32-37*, SC 318 (1985) p.265.

the fact that frequently authors resort to biblical wording in such statements - another decision for the audience: does the speaker fully identify with the biblical statement? In the end, the listener's mind has to assess at an instant's notice how every single reference to either *basileus* or God or heaven or involving all has to be interpreted. The scholar of these texts shares that task even one and a half millennia later. Whether John Chrysostom makes this task easier or harder by leaving behind such an enormous legacy of writings is debatable. The subsequent chapters show that while to organize this legacy is daunting, the richness of the evidence offers compensation for one's labours.

Part II

Chrysostom in Antioch

A Chronology of Chrysostom's Antiochene Works[1]

Before 386:

Expositio in psalmos (C Psalms); PG55.35-497, 712-784; BVIII-X.

375-376:

Adversus oppugnatores vitae monasticae; PG47-48.322; BI.

De compunctione - ad Demetrium - ad Stelechium; PG47-48.393-422; BI.

380-381:

Ad Stagirium a daemone vexatum; PG47-48.421-494; BI.

380-392:

De virginitate; PG47-48.531-596; H. Musurillo (ed.), B. Grillet (transl.), *La Virginité*, SC 125, 1966 (IET).

381:

Ad viduam iuniorem; PG47-48.595-620; H. Ettlinger (ed.), B. Grillet (intr. + transl.), *À une jeune veuve - Sur le mariage unique*, SC 138, 1968 (IET).

382:

De s. Babyla contra Julianum et gentiles; PG49-50.533-572; BIV.

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[1] This is an attempt at an *approximate* chronology, based on the internal evidence contained in these texts, and on the conclusions of their editors. When editors disagree, and when scholars other than the editors are involved, I have given these opinions. The following additional abbreviations are in use: Baur = Chr. Baur, *Johannes Chrysostom und seine Zeit, vol. I - Antiochien, vol. II - Konstantinopel* (Munich, 1929). Bonsdorff = M. v. Bonsdorff, *Zur Predigttätigkeit des Johannes Chrysostomus. Biographisch-Chronologische Studien über seine Homilienserien zu neutestamentlichen Bräuchen* (Helsingfors, 1922). CPG = M. Geerard, *Clavis Patrum Graecorum* 2 (Brepols, Turnhout, 1974). I = Introduction, E = Edition, T = Translation. Abbreviated titles of works as used in the thesis are given in brackets. The authenticity of some texts is not totally free of doubt, but I have only used those which are generally accepted. At the end of this list will be found some certainly inauthentic texts, they appear here because I used them in the thesis to make some point about the criteria for establishing Chrysostom's authorship of texts. It should be noted that a final chronology of Chrysostom cannot be established for many more years, though one may come closer to it once all his works have undergone modern edition. This list is merely intended to assist the reader.

382, 24th January:

De s. hieromartyre Babyla; PG49-50.527-534; BIV.

382, 25th January:

In Juventinum et Maximinum martyres; PG49-50.571-578; BIV.

Before 386:

Ad Theodorum lapsum; J. Dumortier, *À Théodore*, SC 117, 1966 (IET).

In Isaiam (C Isaiah); PG56.11-93; J. Dumortier, *Commentaire sur Isaïe*, SC 304, 1983 (IET).

De sacerdotio; PG47-48.619-692; A.-M. Malingrey, *Sur le Sacerdoce (Dialogue et Homélie)*, SC 272, 1980 (IET); A. Naegle, *Über das Priestertum*, BKV 27, 1926 (Chrysostom IV) (T).

386:

Sermo cum presbyter fuit ordinatus; PG47-48.693-700.

De anathemate; PG47-48.945-953; BII.

386, end of May, 5th anniversary of Meletius' death:

De s. Meletio Antiocheno; PG49-50.515-520; BIV.

386, first months after Chrysostom's ordination:

In Genesim sermones 1-9; PG53-54.579-630; BVIII.

386, 25th December:

In diem natalem; PG49-50.351-362; BIII.

386-387:

De coemeterio et de cruce homiliae 1-2; PG49-50.394-398; BIV. Outside city.

De incomprehensibili dei natura homiliae 1-5; PG47-48.699-778; F. Cavallera, J. Daniélou (intr.), R. Flacellére (trans.), *Sur l'Incompréhensibilité de Dieu*, SC 28, 1951 (IET); A.M. Malingrey, *Sur l'incompréhensibilité de Dieu*, SC 28 bis, Paris 1970.

Adversus Judaeos orationes 1-8; PG47-48.837-942; BII; 387, after De incomprehensibili.

386-398:

In epistulam ad Titum homiliae 1-6; PG62.663-701; J. Tweed, LF 1843 (T).

387:

De Davide et Saule homiliae 1-3; PG53-54.675-684; BVIII.
De decem millium talentorum debitore; PG51-52.17-30; BV.
De viduis; PG51-52.321-338; BV.

387, New Year:

In kalendas; PG47-48.953-962; BII.
De Lazaro conciones 1-7; PG47-48.777-812; BII; 387, 2 days after In kalendas.

387, Epiphany:

De baptismo Christi; PG49-50.363-372; BIII.

387, beginning:

De resurrectione mortuorum; PG49-50.417-432; BIV.

387, around and after Easter:

Ad populum Antiochenum de statuis habitae homiliae 1-21 (Statues); PG49-50.15-222; E. Budge, LF 9, 1842 (T).
De Anna sermone 1-5; PG53-54.629-676; BVIII.

387, September:

Contra Judaeos et gentiles quod Christus sit deus; PG47-48.811-838; BII.

387-388:

Ad illuminandos catechesis 1+I2; PG49-50.221-242; BIII; second ten days after first.

387-397:

De laudibus sancti Pauli apostoli homiliae 1-7; PG49-50.474-514; A. Piédnagel, *Panégyriques de S. Paul*, SC 300, 1982 (IET).

390:

In Matthaeum homiliae 1-90 (C Matthew); PG57-58.21-472; G. Prevost, LF 11+12, 1843 (T); Chr. Baur, BKV 23, 1915, 25+26+27, 1916 (Chrysostom I-IV) (T).

391:

In Iohannem homiliae 1-88 (C John); PG59.23-485; G.T. Stupart + J.G. Hickley, LF 28, 1848, +LF 1852 (T).

392:

In epistulam ad Romanos homiliae 1-32 (C Romans); PG60.538-681; J. Jatsch, BKV 39+42, 1922+1923 (Chrysosyom V+VI) (T).

In epistulam I ad Corinthos argumentum at homiliae 1-44 (C I Corinth.); PG61.9-382; BXVI; J. Ashworth, LF 1839 (T); Bareille: Constantinople, Bonsdorff: 392.

392, 15th April:

De ss. Bernice et Prosdoce; PG49-50.627-644; BIV.

392-393:

In epistulam II ad Corinthos argumentum et homiliae 1-30 (C II Corinth.); PG61.381-611; BXVI; J. Ashworth, LF 1848 (T); Bareille: Constantinople, Bonsdorff: 392-393.

393-394:

De inani gloria et de educandis liberis; A.-M. Malingrey, *Sur la vaine gloire et l'education des enfants*, SC 188, 1972 (IET). This treatise was never published by PG.

394:

In epistulam I ad Timotheum argumentum et homiliae 1-18 (C I Timothy); PG62.501-599; J. Tweed, LF 1843 (T).

In epistulam II ad Timotheum homiliae 1-10 (C II Timothy); PG62.599-663; J. Tweed, LF 1843 (T).

395, Maundy Thursday:

De proditione Judae homiliae 1-2; PG49-50.371-381; BIII; possible links to C Genesis.

395, Good Friday:

De cruce et latrone; PG49-50.397-418; BIV.

395-398:

In illud: *Vidi dominum* (Isaiah 6.1) homiliae 1-6 (C Uzziah); PG56.93-141; J. Dumortier, *Homélies sur Ozias*, SC 277, 1981 (IET).

396-397:

In epistulam ad Ephesios argumentum et homiliae 1-24 (C Ephesians); PG62.9-177; W. Stoder, BKV 1936 (Chrysostom VIII) (T).

Antioch, date uncertain:

De paenitentia homiliae 1-9; PG49-50.277-350; BIII; later years at Antioch.

De s. Pelagia virgine et martyre; PG49-50.579-584; BIV; 9th June of some year at Antioch.

In s. Ignatium martyrem; PG49-50.587-596; BIV; few days after De S. Pelagia.

De Macabeis homiliae 1-3 + 'Damascene' Fragment; PG49-50.617-628; BIV.

De ss. martyribus sermo; PG49-50.645-654; BIV; after De Macabeis.

In s. Barlaam martyrem; PG49-50.675-683; BIV; 16th November.

Ad commentarium in Danielem; PG56.193-246.

Adversus ebriosos et de resurrectione; PG49-50.433-442; BIV; links with Genesis and Acts.

Catecheses ad illuminandos 1-8 (Catecheses); A. Wenger, *Huit catéchèses baptismales inedites*, SC 50, 1957 (IET).

Contra eos qui subintroductas habent virgines; PG47-48.513-532; J. Dumortier, *Saint Jean Chrysostome. Les cohabitations suspectes*, Paris 1955.

Daemones non gubernare mundum; PG49-50.241-274; BIII.

De Chananaea; PG51-52.449-460; BVI. On authenticity problems see CPG 4529.

De consolatione mortis; PG56.293-313; BX; only survived in Latin.

De fato et providentia orationes 1-6; PG49-50.749-772; BIV .

De futurae vitae deliciis; PG51-52.347-354; BV; at a martyrion.

De perfecta caritate; PG56.279-290; BX.

De profectu evangelii; PG51-52.311-320; BV.

De prophetiarum obscuritate homiliae 1-2; PG56.163-193; BX.

De s. Droside martyre; PG49-50.683-694; BIV.

De sancta pentecoste homiliae 1-2; PG49-50.453-470; BIV.

De ss. martyribus; PG49-50.705-712; BIV.

In ascensionem; PG49-50.441-452; BIV; at a martyrion.

In dictum Pauli: *Nolo vos ignorare* (I Corinth. 10.1); PG51-52.241-252; BV.

In illud: *Domine, non est in homine via eius* (Jeremiah 10.23); PG56.153-162; BX.

In illud: *Habentes eundem spiritum* (II Corinth. 4.13) homiliae 1-3 ; PG51-52.281-302; BV.

In illud: *In faciem ei restiti* (Galatians 2.11); PG51-52.371-388; BV.

In illud: *Salutate Priscillam et Aquilam* (Romans 16.3) sermones 1-2; PG51-52.187-208; BV.

In illud: *Utinam sustineretis modicum quid insipientiae meae* (II Corinth. 2.1); PG51-52.301-310; BV.

In magnam hebdomadam; PG55.519-528; BX.

In natalem Christi diem; PG56.385-397; BXI.

In s. Eustathium Antiochenum; PG49-50.595-606; BIV.

In s. Iulianum martyrem; PG49-50.665-676; BIV.

In s. Romanum Martyrem; PG49-50.605-612; BIV.

Non esse ad gratiam concionandum; PG49-50.653-662.

Contra ludos et theatra, PG56.263-271; BX; Constantinople 399 - catastrophic rains, small audience. Or Antioch - 'is this the city of the apostles?'

In principium Actorum homiliae 1-4; PG51-52.63-112; BV; first ones in Antioch, rest Constantinople.

In Genesim homiliae 1-67 (C Genesis); PG53-54.21-581; BVII; Bareille: Antioch. Savilius: Constantinople.

De gloria in tribulationibus; PG51-52.155-164; BV; either Antioch or Constantinople.

De mutatione nominum homiliae 1-4; PG51-52.113-156; BV; maybe in Constantinople after Homilies on Acts.

Commentarius in Iob (C Job); PG64.503-656; H. Sorlin, L. Neyrand, *Commentaire sur Job I + II*, SC 346 + 348, 1988 (IET); authenticity not completely clear.

In sanctum pascha concio; PG51-52.769; doubtful.

Inauthentic, but used in the thesis:

Comparatio regis et monachi; PG47-48.387-393. Probably inauthentic, but has been ascribed to early Antioch period. See Appendix to Chapter 7.

In illud: *In qua potestate haec facis* (Matthew 21.23); PG56.411-429; BX; by Severianus of Gabala. See CPG 4193.

De legislatore; PG56.397-410; BX; by Severianus of Gabala. See CPG 4192 and Chapter 8.

2 Chrysostom in Antioch

The life of John Chrysostom has been the subject of monographs and articles, and although a new, updated biography would be welcome, it is not going to be written in this study. But there are some aspects of Chrysostom's life that should be introduced by excerpts from his own texts and then be augmented with modern scholarship because they are directly relevant to the evaluation of his comments on heaven and about *basileis*. One of the most basic of these aspects must be his environment at Antioch, which should be described simply in order to place some otherwise confusing remarks that are contained in the evidence. Much closer to Chrysostom's own heart must then be the question of his relationship with his audience.

The late Roman and early Byzantine centuries in the history of Antioch have attracted attention from the scholars of both empires. Antioch was an imperial residence without forcing the implications of this presence upon the city as a whole. Antioch was classical in its public life, while being a centre of Christian life and theological activity. These different currents developed and coexisted without any one ever attaining predominance until about the middle of the fourth century, when Christianity gained the upper hand in the city.[1] In having this pluralistic past Antioch was different from Constantinople, and just this difference could be the reason for some of the difficulties Chrysostom was to experience upon his move to the capital.

The aspects of Antioch life mentioned by Chrysostom form a comprehensive catalogue. Closest to his heart are some inhabitants that are not strictly in Antioch at all - the monks in the cave-riddled limestone hills overlooking the city. The landscape of Syria in the fourth century was the scene of monastic expansion. The monks are an influential part of Christian life at Antioch, Christians approach them for spiritual guidance and bring their children to be

[1] A. Lippold, *Theodosius der Große und seine Zeit* (Munich, 1968) p. 90. Julian's difficulties and disillusionment with Antioch as expressed in his *Misopogon* can be partly based on the reaction of the largely Christian city to his pagan reforms - M.W. Gleason, "Festive Satire: Julian's Misopogon and the New Year at Antioch", *Journal of Roman Studies* 76 (1985) 106-120, on this point especially p.107-8. But Gleason points out also other possible factors making Julian unpopular: his tardy measures to deal with famine, and his unconventional approach to imperial protocol, both p.110. Food supply problems and religious controversy are also mentioned by J. Matthews, *The Roman Empire of Ammianus* (London, 1989) p.108.

blessed.[2] His own affinity to them is of course explained by his own spell amongst them. He spent approximately four years in an ascetic community under the tuition, probably, of Diodore of Tarsus. This was followed by two years alone in a cave, permanently damaging his physical and maybe also his mental health by exaggerated self-chastisement.[3] His reverence for the hermits as grounded angels is also in keeping with the attitude of the other Fathers of his period. It is in the homilies on the riot of 387 that the monks take on an active role, comforting the citizens who find that their secular world is crumbling and that the only source of solace is constituted by the representatives of the immaterial world and divine will, the monks, and their priest Chrysostom.[4] But for the most part, the monks put in fleeting appearances, representing a watchful positive power close to the city, the embodiment of good, while there is much in the city that embodies evil.[5]

As regards the city itself, arousing concern amongst the comfortably off for the plight of the socially underprivileged is one of Chrysostom's most persistent concerns. The 'comfortably off' consisted mainly of the numerous imperial staff of the *comes orientis*, *magister militum orientis*, and the governor of the city on the one hand, and the Antiochene councillors, lawyers, teachers, doctors on the other.[6] It cannot be established whether there were more poor than in any other late classical city. Chrysostom himself puts the very rich and the very poor at about 10% each of the total population.[7] But the social contrasts within the city must be considered

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[2] Chr. Baur, *Johannes Chrysostomus und seine Zeit, I - Antiochien, II - Konstantinopel* (Munich, 1929), vol. I p.86-87. Theodoret mentions Antioch's position and the importance of its monks in his 'History of the monks of Syria'. The monks in the hills and grottos overlooking the city appear in II.15; VI.7; VIII. 5-8; X.6; XI.1; XII.6; and XIII.4.

[3] On the identity of the spiritual master see Baur I, p.87. Palladius V.19-38, SC 341 (1988) p.110-111 describes that Chrysostom did permanent damage to his kidneys and gastric organs by two years of almost never lying down and at the most crouching in his cold cave. F.H. Chase, *Chrysostom - A Study in the History of Biblical Interpretation* (Cambridge, 1887) p.14 suggests that this time also permanently affected his mental equilibrium and temper.

[4] Statues 17.3: PG49-50.173. This beneficial involvement of the monks is also attested by Theodoret. He describes in the 'History of the monks of Syria' how St. Macedonius comes down from the hills and, falling in with two generals, asks them to placate the emperor on behalf of Antioch - XIII.7: SC 234 (1977) p. 487-491.

[5] As an example, In illud: *Habentes eundem spiritum*: PG51-52.272: BV.419.

[6] Matthews, *Ammianus*, p.72 points to the fact that this large and largely unproductive contingent of imperial and military personnel, in addition to stationed troops with their special provisioning rights, probably increased the difficulties in food supply. On composition of upper class also see Liebeschuetz, *Antioch. City and Imperial Administration in the Fourth Century* (Oxford, 1972) p.41.

[7] C Matthew 66.3: PG57-58.630. Liebeschuetz, *Antioch*, p.94 puts this total population at 150 000 - 300 000 inhabitants. However, of the 80% between the extremes, a large part may be assumed to have been oppressed and fairly miserable. On p.52-53 Liebeschuetz points to the exposed social and legal position of shopkeepers and tradesmen. On p.129 he

sharp, and Chrysostom describes how he passed through the freezing and starving ranks of the absolutely destitute on his way to the Church.[8]

Chrysostom as a Christian social reformer has a pagan counterpart in Libanius. He too perceives Antioch as falling short of being an ideal city, and this attitude is attested especially by his efforts in the interests of penal reform. Libanius identifies with Antioch as a stronghold of classical values, and as his home town. He opens one season of Olympic Games at Daphne with his Antiochicus, but in a speech on the prison system he shows his social conscience in other remarks which could easily be mistaken for Chrysostom exhorting his flock to more Christian commitment:

> But, their [the influential citizens'] claim is, they are overwhelmed by a mass of business. This business allows you to idle away so many days every month, and it allows you to recline in Daphne and to have and to give enjoyment of a vicious kind...But But this is the first and foremost factor in the respect you show towards that carnival of misrule in Daphne, where the essence of the Festival is to hold aloof from none of its vices.
>
> **Or. 45.23** [9]

And he subsequently attacks the governor for slackness in his responsibilities. With his uncomfortable ideas Libanius is not always popular.[10] He is 'continually finding fault with the existing state of things and praising the good old ways of yore'.[11] This attitude is very similar to that of Chrysostom towards the church: 'But the present church is like a woman that has fallen from her former prosperous days [in terms of zest and

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reconstructs the evidence for public distribution of bread. E. Patlagean, *Pauvreté économique et pauvreté sociale à Byzance* (Mouton, 1977) shows that malnutrition affected large parts of the population on p.101-112. It should also be mentioned that the increasing popular restlessness in Antioch in the later fourth century, which Libanius ascribed to unruly immigrant elements, can be traced in partto repeated food crises - Liebeschuetz, *Antioch*, p.97.

[8] De Lazaro I.8: PG47-48.973. Feldman describes the 'ambivalence of Chrysostom's attitude to pagan civic munificence: how, in spite of his expressed hostility, he...exploits the language of civic praise in his encouragement of almsgiving, transferring the Christian benefactor's glory to a spiritual or heavenly context'. H. Feldman, *Some Aspects of the Christian Reaction to the Tradition of Classical Munificence with Particular Reference to the Works of John Chrysostom and Libanius*, Thesis (Oxford, 1980).

[9] Translated by A.F. Norman, *Libanius - Selected Works vol. I + II*, Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge Mass. + London, 1972), vol. II p.181.

[10] His own friends tell him he has a reputation for tediousness and severity. Or. 2.1, Norman, *Libanius*, vol. II p.11. This speech is even entitled 'To those who called him tiresome'.

[11] R. Pack, *Studies in Libanius and Antiochene Society under Theodosius* , Thesis (University of Michigan, 1935) p.2.

virtue]'.[12] But one should perceive that Libanius in all his criticisms preserves an idealizing note - he essentially wants to restore Antioch as a perfect classical *polis*. However, his fervour is never checked. This especially makes him an interesting parallel to Chrysostom, who also enjoyed tolerance for his outspokenness, a freedom so taken for granted that it is never even remarked upon. Maybe this outspokenness was a habit that proved dangerous in the environment of Constantinople. The evidence accumulated in this thesis hopes to underline the importance of this factor.

If even Libanius voices criticism, what is Chrysostom's view of the dazzling life at Antioch? Although Chrysostom rejects the idea of the Olympic Games with their nude contestants,[13] the Games themselves creep into his rhetorical repertoire and are frequently mentioned, in comparisons or exhortations, throughout the Antiochene homilies.[14] They were celebrated mainly in Daphne and also in Antioch in the summer of every leap year: originally the gift of a prominent citizen to the inhabitants of Antioch, but by the end of the fourth century supported by imperial grants.[15] But there were other, more regular entertainments. Horseracing and wild beast chases were immensely popular and took place in the hippodrome, in close proximity to both palace and the Great Church. These entertainments and the annual festival of special games conducted by the Syriarch used to be council duties taken in turn by its members, just like the management of public baths, and these duties were closely monitored by the governor as the peace of the city depended to some extent on their smooth operation.[16] But it was the emperors who made these events a regular feature on a larger scale, and participants, like the actors employed at the theatre, were paid out of imperial funds.[17] The term 'theatre' may lead to misconceptions: the classical dramas were no longer performed. Instead, the taste of the uneducated populace was catered for in the form of

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[12] C I Corinth. 36.5 (I Corinth. 14.3): PG61.312.

[13] Downey, *A History of Antioch in Syria from Seleucus to the Arab Conquest*, (Princeton, 1961) p.440: '...the Games were celebrated all through Chrysostom's time..'.

[14] Adversus oppugnatores vitae monasticae 3.8: PG47-48.363 and 3.18: PG47-48.379 is maybe the earliest occurrence. They also appear in: In s. Romanum martyrem I.1: PG49-50.606: B IV.334, De Macabeis I.3: PG49-50.621 and II.1., In principium Actorum I.5: PG51-52.76. These are just some references, there are sure to be many more because the aim of this study was not the importance of the Games to Chrysostom - these quotes were only discovered accidentally.

[15] Alan Cameron, *Circus Factions - Blues and Greens at Rome and Byzantium* (Oxford 1976), p.219.

[16] Liebeschuetz, *Antioch*, p.141-144. It should be said that the games excluded gladiatorial fighting after 325 out of consideration for Christian values - p.142.

[17] Cameron, *Circus Factions*, p.218-19. It is noteworthy that Cameron identifies the claque as being restricted to the theatre in Antioch, it did not feature at the hippodrome.

balletic mimes loosely based on classical plots, emphasizing their erotic content, and what one could call show elements. Special legislation barely kept out what could be offensive to the new Christian faith of the empire.[18] This new importance of the theatre for the illiterate and fairly poor led also to the rise of the theatrical claque, controlled by actors who in turn were towards the end of the century increasingly under imperial patronage. This did not save visiting emperors from unflattering acclamations in the theatre, but it illustrates the recession of the powers of the city council.[19] Thus, Chrysostom opposes any sort of circensian game and theatrical entertainment maybe not only because of their content, but because of their anarchic effect on the audience forming factions and mobs.[20] Another reason may be that while the Christian Church could take over most other aspects of civic munificence, of a social network for the people - and Meletius and Flavianus and their staff spent a great part of their time on charitable activities - and could fill them with a new, Christian significance, the circus, the theatre and the hippodrome were elements which could not thus be adapted and therefore were anathema.[21]

Maybe it is partly because of the Games that the garden suburb of Daphne frequently comes to stand for anything that is pagan, dangerous, evil, shameful in Antioch.[22] Partly that can be explained by the fact that Daphne was also a residential area for the very rich of Antioch, partly with its role as the focus for the religious activities of Julian the Apostate, who attempted to rebuild the Apollo Temple there, and came into conflict with the remains of St. Babylas and his local Christian champions, an event narrated and

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18 Patlagean, *Pauvreté*, p. 210-11. Liebeschuetz, *Antioch*, p.145.

19 Liebeschuetz, *Antioch*, p. 212. Cameron, *Circus Factions*, p.274-75.

20 R. Browning, "The Riot of A.D. 387 in Antioch. The Role of the Theatrical Claques in the Later Empire.", *Journal of Roman Studies* 42 (1952) 13-20, draws attention to the frequency of mass frenzies on p.16-17 and quotes Chrysostom, C Matthew 37.6: PG57-58.423C, seeing the theatre 'at the root of every disturbance in cities'. S.R.F. Price, *Rituals and Power. The Roman Imperial Cult in Asia Minor* (Cambridge, 1984) on p.102 goes further and emphasizes the carnival atmosphere also of imperial festivals – a factor influencing the Fathers against imperial ceremonial? One should again consider that events at the theatre, hippodrome and stadium are towards the end of the century entertainments laid on by governor or emperor. B.H. Vandenberghe, "Saint Jean Chrysostome et les Spectacles", *Zeitschrift für Religions- und Geistesgeschichte* 7 (1955) 34-46, mentions on p.35 that Chrysostom had been fond of going to 'the theatre' as a young man. He also summarizes Chrysostom's arguments against these entertainments, including the immorality of the games, their being a waste of time and money, and most importantly a distraction from church attendance.

21 E. Patlagean, "Ancienne hagiographie byzantine et histoire sociale", *Annales. Economies, Sociétés, Civilisations* 1 (Paris, 1968) 106-126, p.120.

22 The unsafe life of real athletes in the Olympic Games is compared with the bliss of spiritual athletes crowned by archangels. Adversus oppugnatores vitae monasticae 3.18: PG47-48.379: BI.193.

interpreted in detail by Chrysostom. 'De hieromartyre S. Babyla' was in all probability delivered in Daphne, while the 'De s. Babyla contra Julianum et contra gentiles' takes up the narrative again. It will reappear when examining the relationship between priest and ruler. But Daphne itself is simply too reminiscent of classical mythology - the gardens and cypress groves, probably sought out by lovers to find privacy as described by Libanius above - again an unacceptable element of immorality. The very landscape is in sensual contrast to the ascetic hills populated by the monks. In this environment, the pagan gods take on a very real importance to the Christian, as Chrysostom illustrates when defining the term '...God of gods?..of the gods of the Hellenes, not because they exist, but because they are supposed to exist by those in error,' in his commentary on the Psalms.[23]

Immorality and shamelessness are, to Chrysostom, rampant in the city itself. The theatre has been mentioned, but it is also the behaviour of women in the streets, the number of shops catering for luxury tastes, the baths that are targets of his admonitions.[24] His horror of these immoral traps for the vulnerable Christian sometimes leads to morbid fantasies about what might go on in these haunts.[25] Once in Constantinople, such attacks concentrate on the behaviour of the very rich and constitute an even greater part of his homilies.

Despite his often scathing criticism, Chrysostom identifies with the city of Antioch, though for different reasons than Libanius:

> God has special attention for our world [meaning Antioch]. The apostle to whom he has submitted the entire world, Peter, who in his hands had received the keys to the kingdom of the heavens with unlimited power, stayed here for a long time, by effect of divine will, and our city in his eyes seemed to counterbalance the rest of the world.
> **In s. Ignatium martyrem 4: PG49-50.591**

But for a study concerned with Chrysostom's views of the *basileus*, the most important element of the Antiochene environment must be the discontinuous residence of fourth century emperors in the city. Did Chrysostom have impressions of palace life and, if so, how did he arrive at these impressions?

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[23] C Psalms 49.1: PG55.241: BIX.285.

[24] Though he himself seems to have experience in ordering, keeping, sending for luxury goods. Contra eos qui subintroductas habent virgines I.9: PG47-48.507-508: BI.408-409. That Antioch was a shopper's dream is illustrated by its colonnaded streets, and Liebeschuetz, *Antioch*, p.55 quotes Libanius on the availability of any commodity in any part of the city - Or. 11.251.

[25] Contra eos qui subintroductas habent virgines II.8: PG47-48.507-508: BI.408-409.

The Great Church, in which the celebrated orthodox bishop Meletius' successor Flavianus and his staff preached and worked, was in direct proximity to the palace and hippodrome on an island in the Orontes. It had been taken from the faction of the rival bishop Paulinus in the city and given to the orthodox in 381 by Theodosius I as part of the reforms engendered by the Second Ecumenical Council of Constantinople, which was chaired by Meletius himself until his death. The 'schism of Antioch' did not end with this imperial decision, continuing to be a matter of concern amongst churchmen of both East and West until the early fifth century.[26] There is no indication that Chrysostom while at Antioch had personal ties or social contact with the palace or with the more elevated staff of provincial government, nor that he would have cared for such communication, but some idea of conditions in the palace was probably widespread. Furthermore, independent of the presence of the emperor, there was extensive ceremonial activity connected with the imperial governor, involving the same elements as imperial ceremonial, albeit on a smaller scale.[27]

Antioch had only recently ceased to be a focus of imperial attention. Throughout the fourth century it had served intermittently as imperial residence. Partly this amounted just to being used as winter quarters on military campaigns against the Persians, as for Constantius in 343-344, 355 and 360-61. The Caesar Gallus spent four years in Antioch, 350-54, and his court seems fairly complete with everything one can imagine in an imperial environment, including intrigues. Julian was firmly established at Antioch from July 362 to March 363, his successor Jovian passed through in 363. Valens seems to have spent most of his time in Antioch between 371-78. But after him the imperial presence seems to cease.[28] There exists a note about

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[26] A. Lippold, *Theodosius*, p.123-124. Downey, *History of Antioch*, offers a map of the city with this island precinct: Map 9, following the index. Theodosius' religious legislation gave orthodox supremacy to Meletius and his successor Flavianus, but the catholic rival Paulinus - irregularly consecrated - was supported by Ambrose and Jerome in the West. This situation could have been resolved with Paulinus' death in 388, but he had appointed his own successor. After a council in Capua in 392 which appointed Theophilus of Alexandria - later Chrysostom's arch enemy - a council in Caesarea (Palestine) in 393 finally confirmed Flavianus' legitimacy. But the Christians of Antioch only really became one united group in the fifth century. More will be said about the Great Church on p.53. Apart from the supporters of Paulinus, the Arians gathered round their bishop appointed by Valens, and after 375 there was also a splinter group around one Vitalus. See A. Lippold, *Theodosius*, p.90-91, and A. Fliche + V.Martin, *Histoire de l'Église* 3, (Paris, 1945) p.449-450.

[27] Liebeschuetz, *Antioch*, p.208-209 describes how the governor entering the city would expect a reception committee composed of the council and notables outside the city. The governor would descend from his carriage amidst the acclamations (rhythmic, but not always flattering) of the people.

[28] G. Downey, *History of Antioch*, p.360-400

the palace at Antioch in the work of John Rufus, Bishop of Maiouma, writing about a hundred years later:

> There is in that city [Antioch] an imperial palace which is in no respect inferior to those of Rome or Constantinople as regards beauty or grandeur or any other aspect of splendour - so say those who have seen it. But it was closed because it is not used, and it was guarded in case the emperor happened to come to these parts.
> **Plérophories, Ch.88, p.142** [29]

It is not sure which palace John Rufus means. For when Theodosius built a new palace, he built it at Daphne, by no means downtown Antioch. Also, the imperial presence was of a transient quality, and for the last two decades of the fourth century, the period when Chrysostom was most active and Libanius still around, one may assume that the emperor was a remote figure of authority, far away but casting a long shadow – the homilies on the riot of the statues in 387 mirror this quality.

Still, a large number of the inhabitants of Antioch, Chrysostom among them, must have been witnesses to imperial presence at Antioch. In the case of Chrysostom this applies, on and off, to roughly the first thirty years of his life. The opinions that were shaped accordingly cannot have been only positive. Also, there are negative traits of earthly rule which even the best *basileus* is bound to exhibit, and Chrysostom picks up these issues.[30] The result is a scathing description of imperial taxation:

> For this *basileus* [God], being mild, does not put collectors on you, but he wants voluntary offerings, even the smallest goods you offer he accepts, and he does not urge if someone tarries long because he has little or nothing... You also need to pay no fee for the registration of this tax, and you need not worry that it is lost through the agents - you just give your tribute, the Master (δεσπότης) takes it up into heaven, he undertakes the whole matter, so it is more profitable for you. You also do not have to worry about transport - just give your tribute, it will rise immediately - not as pay for other soldiers, but as your own investment from which you gain great interest. Here you do not get anything back of what you gave, but there you receive it back with great honour...
> **C Matthew 66.5: PG57-58.631C-632A**

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[29] *John Rufus of Maiouma – Plérophories*, ed. + transl. F. Nau, Patrologia Orientalis 8 (1911), Ch.88, p.142

[30] Liebeschuetz, *Antioch*, p.52 describes how shopkeepers and tradesmen were subject to a particularly oppressive tax called the *collatio lustralis*. On p. 164 we are told that taxation was heavy generally, especially in the 380ies and that the riot of 387 was caused by a supplementary tax.

After the environment which provided much of the content of Chrysostom's works, the next concern must be the atmosphere, the setting in which these works fulfilled their purpose - educating, inspiring, encouraging his flock. In turn, the importance of his audience for his preaching deserves illustration. 'Audience' must be a misnomer in Chrysostom's eyes, for although the people in his church occasionally behaved like an appraising committee, this is not what he was speaking to them for. To him, everyone in the church is part of his congregation, a soul looking for the way to heaven.

The overwhelming bulk of Chrysostom's work is homiletic. That means it was delivered to an immediate audience, it was not meant for quiet perusal by the private individual. Of course he also wrote in other genres producing texts that were never delivered orally. 'De virginitate' and 'De incomprehensibili dei natura' for example were expositions in that sense. I personally find that his style, and above all his methods of making a point, of explaining a spiritual dimension or of developing an interpretation, do not change with his change of genre, apart from the fact that immediate interaction with an audience only takes place in the homilies. He always directs himself towards the Christian seeking instruction in the Word and advice in his day-to-day life, never towards the theologian or intellectual. One should also emphasize that some treatises and of course the major letters were often the reaction to some personal experience (De sacerdotio) or were directed to a friend or close acquaintance on a matter of spiritual urgency (Ad Theodorum lapsum, Ad viduam iunioram). Hardly anything he pronounced was directed into abstract space, or was written to satisfy a private urge for spiritual and intellectual activity or simply civilized occupation, as for example the poetry of Gregory of Nazianzus was. It is this quality of always responding to what one might call live recipients that make his style of writing comparatively uniform throughout his works.

The next consideration must return to the main part of his output, his homilies. It has been discussed to what extent Chrysostom wrote up his homilies before delivering them , but a final answer can hardly be found. Who wrote them down if he spoke *ex tempore* must follow as the next question, which leads back to the everchanging problem of authenticity. The prevailing opinion at the moment is that most homilies were delivered without too much written preparation, and were taken down by stenographers among the audience. Stenography had gained in importance in the late fourth century, it was an advantage to have this skill when entering imperial

service.[31] This implies that there might well have been several stenographers taking down Chrysostom's sermons - some maybe colleagues from among the clergy, perhaps even at his behest in order to produce an authorative version for distribution, and some educated parishioners taking notes privately. As a result the degree of roughness of a text has come to stand for the degree of its authenticity and closeness to the original version.[32] But this cannot be the concern of this chapter, these remarks merely want to point towards the considerations that must be taken into account by anybody seriously concerned with Chrysostom.

These problems are in part generated by the sheer bulk of Chrysostom's output, and this bulk in turn points to the tireless preaching activity that characterizes him. In this chapter, I tried to gather all the references that can be found in his homilies referring to this activity - describing the location, or directly addressing the 'audience', his congregation, about their behaviour, or isolated remarks indicating how often he preached, and how big the audience was. All this information should result in describing the attitude of Chrysostom towards his congregation, and to what extent his language, his descriptions, his explanations were conditioned by this congregation. Partly, this aspect of his work has been explored before.[33] But it is probably not necessary to point out how crucial his pedagogical awareness is to evaluating the content and context of his metaphors and comparisons.[34]

The question of location is, of course, partly solved by Chrysostom's own frequent references to the Great Church of Antioch. This church had been built by Constantine the Great as a golden-domed octagon within a courtyard. The marble pulpit from which Chrysostom would have preached was in its centre, around it the different components of his flock were grouped.[35]

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31 Liebeschuetz, *Antioch*, p.242.

32 G. Kennedy, *Classical Rhetoric and its Christian and Secular Tradition from Ancient to Modern Times* (Chapel Hill - University of North Carolina Press, 1980) mentions the method of stenography, p.250. F.T. Gignac, "The Text of Acts in Chrysostom's Homilies", *Traditio* 26 (1970), p.310-4 explains the greater validity of rough versions over smooth. These are just two scholars among a number.

33 R. Kaczynski, *Das Wort Gottes in Liturgie und Alltag der Gemeinden des Johannes Chrysostomus* (Freiburg, 1974)

34 Kaczynski, *Wort Gottes*, p.24: 'systematisch - theoretische Darstellung theologischer Fragen liegt ihm nicht...Da Chrysostom jedoch als zeitgemäßer Verkündiger des Wortes Gottes jeden anderen Kirchenvater...an Genialität übertrifft, darf er in allen Fragen der Theologie als besonders zuverlässiger Zeuge für den...Stand der Dogmenentwicklung in Anspruch genommen werden...Hierbei ist freilich immer daran zu denken, daß seine Werke größtenteils Niederschriften seiner Worte sind...' .

35 Downey, *Antioch - Theodosius*, p.103.

These groups partly mirrored the different stages of initiation into the mysteries of the sacraments, but they also reflected the ethnic composition of Antioch. Chrysostom was preaching in Greek, while large parts of the native population of Antioch and certainly the majority of the rural Christians were Syriac and spoke no Greek. They were grouped together listening to a simultaneous interpreter.[36] The environment of his sermons on various local martyrs can be reconstructed by their topicality. For their feastdays, the congregation and Chrysostom apparently convened at their respective martyria, often outside the city.[37] In some of these homilies, references are made to the toilsome way from the city, and to the heat from the sun, but apart from that, the change of locality does not seem to influence Chrysostom's preaching.

While this is all that can be surmised about the circumstances of Chrysostom's preaching, his audience immediately comes to life in his altercations with it. This communication is characterized by Chrysostom reacting to the behaviour of the people present in the church.[38] Chrysostom complains, but it must have been an uplifting task to control the applause of his listeners. In his commentary on Genesis, he has to admonish the congregation that it would be better to listen than to clap, he reminds them that St. John did not accept applause and that it would be more valuable if they would take his exhortations to heart.[39] Apparently nobody paid much attention to that, for two sermons later he again has to suppress immoderate applause.[40]

However, noisy enthusiasm was not necessarily the order of the day. When accompanying Chrysostom to Constantinople, some references made to the size of the congregation there will take on a different importance. In Antioch,

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36 Downey, *Antioch - Theodosius*, p.105. In Statues 19.1: PG49.188 Chrysostom describes how the Syriac farmers throng the city at Easter in order to attend the service.

37 A classic example of this: In s. Barlaam martyrem: PG49-50.677ff: BIV.440ff. De futurae vitae deliciis: PG51-52.347ff: BV.540 was given at a martyrion, as was In ascensionem: PG49-50.442ff: BIV.83ff, and also De coemeterio et de cruce: PG49-50.393ff: BIV.1.

38 Kaczynski, *Wort Gottes*, p.299: 'Als guter Redner bezieht Chrysostom diese Reaktionen, soweit wie möglich, in seine Ausführungen ein. Er beobachtet das Mienenspiel der Zuhörer und schließt daraus, wie seine Worte aufgenommen...werden.'. An example is C Genesis 41.3: PG53.377f. On p.17-21 Kaczynski emphasizes that even so Chrysostom did not 'mix' with people, the service remained a holy cult.

39 C Genesis 54.2, PG53-54.472.

40 C Genesis 56.2: PG53-54.488. Kaczynski, *Wort Gottes*, p.116: 'Man spürt bei Chrysostom selbst eine gewisse Ratlosigkeit angesichts der Frage, wie dem Bedürfnis der Zuhörer nach rhetorischen Glanzleistungen einerseits und der Nachahmung der einfachen und kunstlosen apostolischen Predigtweise andererseits Genüge getan werden kann.'

at any rate, churchgoing discipline seems to have been slack at times: 'How can I explain the necessary things if you only come to listen once or twice a year'?[41] Some churchgoers even left after the exciting sermon, before less entertaining parts of the liturgy.[42] How much thought Chrysostom must have spent on the problem of getting the day-to-day Christian interested in tuition, and then getting the content of this tuition across, he reveals in 'De mutatione nominum'.[43] He is afraid to go on for too long with his explanations. He describes the dilemma of the pastor - there are two kinds of audiences, because some people will soon lose concentration, while some will always be eager to hear more.[44] He is sensitive to the ability of noise to destroy immediately a carefully inspired train of thought. He astutely describes what happens in mind and body at the slightest disturbance, comparable to the processes set in motion by a thorn entering a heel.[45] That in all his serious concern Chrysostom remains human is shown by his attitude to laughter. Not to laugh in church is a stern reprimand in his commentary on Hebrews.[46] But he also points to the occasional necessity of moderate and timely laughter as a refreshment for the soul.[47]

These direct references to the presence (or absence) of the congregation, and to the task of preaching are relatively rare. But a lot of information can be obtained from exhortations that are sweetened with flattering comparisons, or that are woven into a particular argument. And most of these passages refer to the behaviour of the congregation in church whilst simply listening without much reaction.

> Do you not see that also in royal palaces all noise is banned and deep silence rules everywhere? You too are entering a royal palace, not an earthly one, but a much more awful one - the palace of the *basileus* in the heavens, therefore behave with greatest modesty. For you stand amidst the choir of angels, you are the companion of archangels and sing with the seraphim. All these choirs show greatest reverence in

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41 De baptismo Christi1PG49-50.364: BIII.612. This passage will appear again on p.125.

42 Kaczynski, *Wort Gottes*, p.68-70 on liturgy and its sequence.

43 De mutatione nominum II.1: PG51-52.123: BV.176.

44 Kaczynski, *Wort Gottes*, describes the principles of Chrysostom's adaptation to the needs of his audience on pp.191, and on p.196 he compares the preacher with the doctor. On pp.200-201 he examines Chrysostom's attitude to applause in detail, detecting a change to greater strictness in Constantinople.

45 C I Corinth. 31.3 (I Corinth. 12.25): PG61.260-261: LF.429-430.

46 C Hebrews 15.4: PG63.122.

47 Kazcynski, *Wort Gottes* quotes C Genesis 11.1: PG53.90f for this on p.190. I found the same statement in C Hebrews 15.4: PG63.122: LF1877.196-197. In view of the considerable time gap which must be assumed for those two texts, the similarity of phrasing is remarkable.

their attitude and sing before God with a holy awe, the *basileus* of the universe, their mystical song and the holy hymns.
C Matthew 19.3 PG57+58.277.C

Already the importance of the earthly court-heavenly court parallel becomes evident. This also applies to Chrysostom's commentary on John.[48] Chrysostom describes how to arrive slovenly in the heavenly sphere among angels is just like introducing a harlot into an earthly palace or getting drunk, and he points to the known consequences of such behaviour. And elsewhere he compares approaching the heavenly *basileus* with an evil-smelling soul to approaching an earthly *basileus* with bad breath .[49] Very similar to this is a scene where the offence consists of dragging in a body for burial in the palace and spreading a stench in the holiest of heavens.[50] In these scenes Chrysostom can be seen to reflect the strictness of the code of behaviour in the palace.[51] One more passage should be given fully . Again attending the church service is compared to being present at a heavenly court:

For even in earthly palaces none of the guards who stand around the *basileus* (*τῶν τῷ βασιλεῖ παρεστηκότων*) would neglect to please him, who wears the diadem and sits upon the throne, by troubling himself about the cries of daws, or the noise of flies and gnats (*μυιῶν καὶ κωνώπων*) flying and buzzing about him.
C John 29.3: PG59.172A

Neatly, this description gives us details of the atmosphere in which Chrysostom preached. So jackdaws could be heard, maybe nesting in the roof of the lofty 'Great Church'. And mosquitoes, not just bluebottles, were a problem, even during the daytime - maybe a consequence of that unique feature making Antioch so beautiful, the waters surrounding it. On another occasion, Chrysostom once again wants to discipline his flock, saying they observe greater silence when an imperial edict is read in the theatre than when the laws of God are announced in church.[52] This is followed by a clear statement on the inferiority of the Empire:

But He who sent us these texts [decrees] is much greater than this ruler, and the theatre much superior, for in it there are not only men, but also angels and archangels, and the prizes promised there...are much more magnificent than those one wins in earthly contests.

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[48] C John 5.4: PG59.60B-C. This passage will appear again on p. 67.

[49] C Ephesians 3.4: PG62 .28CD. This passage will appear again on p. 67.

[50] C Matthew 73.3: PG57+58.676C. This passage will appear again on p. 67.

[51] Matthews, *Ammianus*, p. 262.

[52] Liebeschuetz, Antioch, p.106 describes the protocol of the silent, standing audience listening to imperial letters. Libanius refers to it in Or. 1.157.

> Therefore not only we humans, but also the angels and archangels, the armies of heaven and all the inhabitants of the earth shall praise the Lord.
> **C Matthew 19.9: PG57-58.285B**

The assortment of passages above, with Chrysostom referring to the circumstances in which he preached, set the scene and establish that Chrysostom was a pastor first and foremost, and not a soliloquising theologian. Given the length of his sermons, these references are in fact quite few. But then they are only those that deal primarily with the congregation, and are not connected with explanations of christological or biblical concepts or with instructions on how to lead the Christian life.[53] That everything Chrysostom said in these matters was totally adapted to the needs and capacities of his charges should become even more clear in the next chapter, dealing with Chrysostom's view of metaphor, and how it is to be used. To help the souls of his flock was not a task for him, it seemed an innate urge, almost a *raison d'être* to lift them up by his God-given and almost inexhaustible power of speech, as he himself realized in his first sermon as presbyter:

> It is not without regret that my speech comes to a halt, I burn to pursue it further, and it is with bitter pain that I leave it incomplete...
> **Sermo cum presbyter fuit ordinatus 4: PG47-48.699: BII.126**

53 A. Stötzel, *Kirche als 'neue Gesellschaft'. Die humanisierende Wirkung des Christentums nach Johannes Chrysostomus*. Beiträge zur Theologie 51 (Münster, Aschendorff, 1984) on p.206 claims that there is 'keine Möglichkeit nachzuprüfen, inwieweit sich das Leben der Christen von Antiochien und Konstantinopel durch die Predigten des Chrysostomus verändert hat.'

3 Chrysostom and Figurative Speech

Illustrating how Chrysostom preached should be followed by illustrating how he got some specific concerns across to the audience. Vital to this study is how he employed figurative speech when tackling this task. Work has been done on this problem, and the prospect of examining what Chrysostom himself has to say about it is promising.[1] There is enough evidence, even when just choosing from court-heaven parallels, to support consistent observations. One can expect explanations of the mechanics of figurative speech, why it is used and how - all from Chrysostom's point of view.

However, there are prior considerations. This aspect of Chrysostom's preaching should be seen against his theological background, the Antiochene tradition of scriptural interpretation. By 'Antiochene' one should also understand the traditions developed by the theologians of Edessa and Caesarea (Palestine), as it is this group as a whole which is seen as the opposite to the Alexandrian method of exegesis with its emphasis on allegory both in Scripture and in its interpretation.[2] The 'Antiochenes', of whom Diodore of Tarsus was of particular importance to Chrysostom, rejected this practice and concentrated on a literal and historical approach.[3]

Introducing the term 'allegorical' makes necessary a definition of terms. I will attempt to define certain figures of speech which may be used, and each general definition will be followed by a general statement on how Chrysostom uses this figure. The first of these terms, 'allegory', can be defined as meaning something, but expressing it in terms that do not belong to this something.[4] If allegory is used in composing a statement, it leads to a

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[1] Sr. M. A. Burns, *St. John Chrysostom's Homilies on the Statues: A Study of their Rhetorical Quality and Form* (Diss. Catholic University of America, Washington D.C., 1930) defines and analyses the different techniques – rather than contents – of metaphor, allegory *e.a.* referring to these specific homilies. Her observations about the general principles underlying Chrysostom's use of these techniques may be considered as applying to his other works as well: she draws attention to the fact that his works are not studied expositions consciously involving rhetorical techniques, 'but are examples of *ex tempore* preaching' – p. 117.

[2] Chase, *Chrysostom*, p.2-3.

[3] Baur I, p.77 on the importance of Diodore.

[4] J.A. Coulter's definition of classical allegory on p.64 of *The Literary Microcosm. Theories of Interpretation of the Later Neoplatonists* (Leiden, Brill 1976) might be useful: 'allegoria...refers to an extended statement...which is so formulated that the speaker will say

thing not appearing in its own term, and to terms appearing which do not mean themselves. Allegorical interpretation, on the other hand, aims to establish what hidden things are meant by the terms found in a statement.[5] Connecting these definitions with observations made across Chrysostom's texts, I find that Chrysostom does not employ allegorical composition in the sense of describing something in the terms of something else without leaving it clear what is the subject and what is the language used to describe it. Also, Chrysostom limits his use of allegorical interpretation to straight translations - as when explaining that 'God sitting' means 'God being stable'. He does not introduce a new opaque image to explain a difficult passage of Scripture. He also does not construct long cohesive paraphrases running parallel to biblical passages without frequently giving the listener opportunity to perceive the links between the passage and his rendition of it. On the basis of all these points, 'allegory' is not a term I would like to apply to Chrysostom's God-*basileus* parallel. A further point connected with allegorical interpretation: Chrysostom does not seem to tackle the problem that the decision whether a biblical text ceases to be literal and needs interpretation - even just in terms of a straight translation - is entirely subjective.

Another figure of speech is metaphor. In one definition, it involves 'the transferred use of a term that properly belongs to something else'.[6] One should note that the something for which the transferred term is used in the metaphor may not have a term of its own, which makes metaphor an advantageous expedient when expressing spiritual dimensions.[7] Chrysostom responds especially to this useful quality of metaphor. But one will note that usually Chrysostom makes it easy to discern when he goes into figurative mode and employs adopted terms, especially as these terms are always taken from a limited range of themes.

This clarity brings his metaphors very close to the figure of speech he uses perhaps most frequently when applying imperial terminology to divine qualities - the simile. A simile may have the same message as a metaphor, but it operates differently in that it uses both the real subject and the something

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one thing, but means another...On one side, allegory shaded off into metaphor in those cases where, though the same relationship between surface and meaning was present, only a single word or phrase was in question: figure here becomes trope...'. But on p.67: 'any given symbol can be explained in a variety of ways...', which particularly fits Chrysostom.

[5] J. Whitman, *Allegory. The Dynamics of an Ancient and Mediaeval Technique* (Oxford, 1987) p.3-4.

[6] J.M. Soskice, *Metaphor and Religious Language* (Oxford, 1985) p.4.

[7] Soskice, *Metaphor*, p.8.

else that is brought in to explain it in a straight comparison. Thus Chrysostom in countless similes often introduced by conjunctions like *καθάπερ* (just as, like) presents a clear comparison between God and the earthly basileus.

These figures of speech have so far been defined as isolated linguistic processes and devices. But this does not fully reflect how they are being employed by Chrysostom, and it does not reflect the full potential of especially metaphor and simile.[8] Simile emphasizes the link between something and a model of this something. Metaphor may, as has been said above, lend expression to something that does not have its own terms of expression. Both, therefore, rely on the use of imagination as a mental process to make their messages more plausible. When this important characteristic of these figures of speech is combined with the fact that Chrysostom pursues pedagogical and not purely intellectual aims, and with the observation that in his preaching he often mixes figures of speech and does not adhere to clinical definitions, another useful term emerges. 'Image' offers itself as a term which refers to figures of speech without effecting a rigid classification, and which expresses the pictorial reconstruction of the message that takes place in the mind of the listener.[9]

That 'analogy' has not been mentioned amongst these figures of speech may be considered an obvious omission, in so far as analogy can be intended to express a similarity of characteristics and structure between two things, such as between the hierarchy of heaven and the hierarchy of the imperial court. But in connection with religious language analogy has recently been defined as a linguistic extension of a characteristic onto a subject which does not really possess this characteristic. And analogy, according to this definition, accomplishes this without involving the imagination of the listener.[10] Because it lacks this quality, and in order to avoid confusion, 'analogy' is not used to describe any of Chrysostom's figures of speech in this thesis. I intend to work with the terms 'translation', 'metaphor', 'simile' and 'image' when now proceeding to collate Chrysostom's types of figurative speech and his statements about them.

To start on a basic level, Chrysostom tries to express a divine property. The awful nature of God is made tangible by using the *basileus* as a translation:

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[8] Soskice, *Metaphor*, p.59.
[9] Soskice, *Metaphor*, p.55.
[10] Soskice, *Metaphor*, p.64-66.

> He is not only a God and a great Lord, he is also a great *basileus* - 'a great *basileus* over all the earth' - Psalm 47.2-3.
> **In ascensionem 16: PG51-52.790: BVI.592**

Another example already introduces the basic pattern of parallels between royal and heavenly terminology, not without hinting at the limitations of the earthly terms and the necessity of constantly keeping in mind that these are borrowed expressions:

> Also, when you hear of a throne and a seat at the right hand, you understand not a [material, real] throne, nor a circumscribed space, but out of 'throne' and 'seat' the expression of the similitude and equality of glory...
> **De incomprehensibili dei natura 4: SC28.230: PG48.732B**

In another text, sitting on a throne is seen as the symbol of enacting judgement.[11] The same definition is explored at length in another passage, and here the translation is reminiscent of that given by the Cappadocian Fathers:

> Do not let the phrase 'rise' [Rise, my Lord...Psalm 3.7] present any material image before your eyes. That expresssion, like 'being seated', must not be understood in a corporeal sense in connection with God. 'You are seated for eternity' says [David]. What does that describe? Stability... 'Rise' presents the power of God to chase and destroy evildoers....
> And how can he rise who is already that high and remains forever at the highest degree of glory? The elevation of his nature is not subject to diminution...
> **C Psalms 7.6: PG55.89: BIX.17**

Immaterial notions, spiritual concepts invariably are also signified by other heavenly accoutrements. Thus the wings of angels, Cherubim, Seraphim signify the sublimity of that angelic nature, which is what lifts it above human nature.[12] Another image for which Chrysostom offers various translations is the heavenly kingdom itself. The most obvious is his statement that 'in the kingdom of heaven' simply means 'in spiritual affairs and all those concerning the heavens'.[13] This might even be called a realistic idea, no sublime concept - earthly realms can also be defined by all that belongs to them. But against that stand at least two instances where 'kingdom of heaven' is translated as 'end of the world', 'day of resurrection and his awful

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[11] C Isaiah 4.2: SC304.260.

[12] De incomprehensibili dei natura 3; SC28.188-90; PG48.724C.

[13] C Matthew 37.2: PG57-58.422.

return',[14] or similarly as 'first and last arrival of the Lord'.[15] It may be significant that the two instances of this translation both come from the homilies on Matthew, but then so does the very different translation of the 'kingdom of heaven' given first of all. But all these translations have one thing in common. Although they are likewise based on standard exegesis of Scripture, they are very different from the interpretations witnessed in earlier texts, like those of Athanasius and Basil of Caesarea. Chrysostom in the directness of his explanations could leave his audience under the impression that these are *ex tempore* interpretations. It is only in isolated passages that Chrysostom says at all why the heavenly kingdom is described in human terms, as in a statement on Matthew 18.23-25 where he explains that the comparison of God with a human *basileus* consulting with his subjects is chosen to underline God not only as a ruler, but also as a legislator.[16] And a slightly different definition but with a more detailed explanation of the same process can be found in his commentary on Psalms:

> God also gives the name of 'kingdom' to this heritage. The goods that await us are hidden under this word; God uses images and figures to give us some idea that we can comprehend. Sometimes that is 'kingdom', or 'wedding' or 'rule', he uses terms that are most powerful on earth to faciliate for us the understanding of these immortal goods, of that eternal glory, of unending bliss, the community with Christ, with which nothing can be compared.
> **C Psalms 5.1: PG55.62: BVIII.587**

The definition changes again when Chrysostom moves from the interpretation of 'heavenly kingdom' to that of 'divine royalty'. He combines two images, that of the sheperd and that of the *basileus*:

> If I proclaim the royalty of the Saviour, it is because I see him affixed to the cross. It is the duty of a *basileus* to die for his people. He himself says: 'The good sheperd gives his life for his flock' (John 10.11). Thus, the good *basileus* gives his life for his subjects. The saviour having offered his life, I call him by the title of *basileus* on the strength of this.
> **De cruce et latrone II.3: PG49-50.413: BIV.36**

These instances highlight the use of metaphor, of certain images as a language to describe subjects whose own terms are too sublime for human understanding. They are glimpses of Chrysostom's specific vocabulary when translating metaphors, conveying their meaning. Some more items of this

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[14] C Matthew 16.4: PG57-58.243B.

[15] C Matthew 10.2: PG57-58.186D.

[16] De decem millium telentorum debitore 2: PG51-52.19-20: BV.13.

vocabulary may be found in the extracts following now, although they are primarily chosen because they describe Chrysostom's idea of how a metaphor works, why such images are chosen, and why the meaning they stand for is not employed in the original, why the medium of translation into these images is deemed necessary. On examination, one of the desired effects turns out to be the elevation of the reader or listener or believer onto a higher plane:

> 'This is what the Lord says, the Lord of hosts' (Isaiah 3.15). Why hosts, armies? He speaks of angels, of archangels, of the powers above, transporting the listener from earth to heaven, inspiring him with that great kingdom of his.
> **C Isaiah 3.7: SC304.182**

And the passage also supplies an explanation of 'hosts and armies', although one of little novelty, as 'angelic hosts' is a well-worn combination by itself. A more stringent qualification of the use of 'army' and 'choir' is given in connection with martyrs:

> Let nobody commit the crime of giving to the multitude of martyrs the name of 'choir' or 'army'. The choir and the army, completely different things, are here united. For, like choirs the martyrs go about beaming under torture; like warriors, they display the most admirable courage ...
> **De ss. martyribus 1: PG49-50.707: BIV.487**

And Chrysostom subsequently shows his awareness of the fact that the stringing together of 'army' and 'choir' really jars by providing a different comparison for each of the terms. Metaphor as a preparation to open the way between heavenly message and believers appears also in the homilies on Matthew.[17] Christ mentions things heavenly to stimulate the minds of the disciples out of their earthly lassitude.[18] That those of limited mental capacities - limited in the face of the magnitude of what is to be understood - need such help is also demonstrated earlier in the homilies on Matthew, where Chrysostom explains how God communicated with man in the Old Testament:

> For those [the peoples of the Old Testament] who did not yet have enough understanding and docility, one needed props that created an external impression: the desert, the mountain, the smoke, the sound of trumpets and more of that kind. For the more understanding and tractable, however, who were already above these superficialities [i.e. the believers of the New Testament] all that was unnecessary.

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[17] C Matthew 34.4: PG57-58.402D.

[18] C Matthew 18.6: PG57-58.272D.

With this statement Chrysostom relegates the *Bildersprache* of the Old Testament into the realm of didactic necessity. The means of communication used at the beginning of God's contact with man, these natural and supernatural events, are needed in their solidity and intensity to make an impact on the unformed believer. They are not in themselves images, but they have the same purpose.[19] The elements Chrysostom describes here as having this function in the Old Testament are somewhat similar to, but perhaps more primitive than, the images he himself uses to communicate the meaning of God's word - like throne, host and so on.[20] The same observation is made by Chase: it is Chrysostom's tenet that the Old Testament seems inferior to the New Testament because it needs to respond to the greater 'dullness' of its audience. This does not turn the New Testament into an *emendatio* of earlier inadequacies.[21] Much rather, the changing means of communication, including figures of speech, in Scripture are part of 'God's plan for the gradual education of mankind'.[22]

The Old Testament frequently prompts Chrysostom to explain the techniques and purposes of allegory: 'The events of the Old Testament were the images of what happened under Grace'.[23] The necessity of condescension (*συγκατάβασις*) is omnipresent - for example Chrysostom recounts that while David speaks a human language, the sense hidden in his words is worthy of God.[24] The important point is that he urges his listeners to see something immaterial, something spiritual as the reality behind these terms. Chrysostom considers also the images used in New Testament texts and the preaching of his day as a condescension to the capabilities of the average human mind as he explains when giving a further translation of the image 'angelic wing':[25]

> What is the meaning of these feathers that suggest wings to us? The incorporeal powers obviously do not have feathers, but once again the

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19 Kaczynski, *Wort Gottes*, p.185 applies that also to Chrysostom's flock: 'der Verkündiger hat Rücksicht zu nehmen auf die begrenzte Aufnahmefähigkeit und die menschlichen Schwächen seiner Gemeinde'.

20 Kaczynski, *Wort Gottes*, p.213ff states that Chrysostom's flock was surprisingly well acquainted with Scripture, although not enough by their preacher's standards.

21 Chase, *Chrysostom*, p.40-41.

22 Chase, *Chrysostom*, p.50.

23 In illud: *Habentes eundem spiritum* II.5: PG51-52.285: BV.441.

24 C Psalms 7.10: PG55.95: BIX.28.

25 Kaczynski, *Wort Gottes* p.25 sees as 'Schlüssel aller Aussagen ...der typisch antiochenische Begriff "*συγκατάβασις*"'. This was chosen by God and has to be applied by the preacher - p.179, again p.400.

> prophet [Isaiah] shows us by means of exaggerated images the sublime realities, condescending to the weakness of his listeners and revealing to us with precision, by his condescension, thoughts which surpass all understanding... What do the wings signify, then? The high and sublime nature of these powers. This is just as one sees Gabriel flying and descending from the heavens, to show us his speed and agility.
> **C Isaiah 6.2: SC304.264**

Chrysostom also draws attention to another element contributing to the complexity of the images used in the Old Testament - human language:

> Note the condescension of Scripture catering for our weakness...these expressions 'he rises up' and 'he descends' are not worthy of God....But...he speaks to us in the human way; the human ear...would be incapable of understanding the sublimity of his language if he expressed himself in a language worthy of God.
> **C Genesis 60.1: PG53-54.521: BVIII.224**

He also interprets the allegories used by David, who 'pursues this allegorical language' to give a prophetic description of the Church as the bride at the right hand of Christ.[26] And the significance of the Old Testament as an image in itself is emphasized, as 'all the elements of the Old Testament are a *typos* and figure'.[27] This, of course, gives these images a life of their own and greater validity than Chrysostom's explanation that they are just aids to understanding.[28] In the event, Chrysostom seems to combine both possibilities. He explains that the passage of the people of Israel through the Red Sea prefigures Baptism, and continues:

> What is shadow, what is reality? Let us take as an example the images drawn by painters. You have often seen the royal icon with its brilliant colours; after having sketched the subject with a few light lines, the artist paints the *basileus*, and the royal throne, and the horses around, and the guards, and the enemies, chained and overcome. But if you only see the sketch, you do not know all, but you are also not totally ignorant - there is vaguely a man and a horse. Which is the *basileus* and which the enemy, you do not know precisely, until the colours make clear the true content and show it all. You cannot explain the whole content of the picture if the colours have not been put in, and you consider the sketch sufficient, thinking it gives you some knowledge of the subject. Think along those lines when comparing Old and New Testament, and do not demand from the image the exactness of reality.

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[26] C Psalms 44.10: PG55.198-199: BIX.210.

[27] C Psalms 46: PG55.328: BIX.436.

[28] G. Kennedy, *Greek Rhetoric under Christian Emperors* (Princeton, PUP 1983) even goes as far as to say that 'it is characteristic of John to believe that things mean what they say' – p.247. Th. McKibbens, "The Exegesis of John Chrysostom: Homilies on the Gospels", *Expository Times* 93.9 (1982) 264-270, gives a more logical explanation which fits with Chrysostom's own statements: '...because all Jewish matters were types, he did not feel it necessary to allegorize difficult passages like Origen.' – p.268.

With this last sentence, Chrysostom intends to help the listener put the images of the Old Testament into the right place: not to look to them for final formulations, but to accept the idea behind the difficult phrasing. That the identification of this idea is correct can then in turn be checked against its counterpart in the New Testament. Subsequently, more images are described, but this particular passage receives confirmation by a counterpart found in the context of an excursus on the separation of the Red Sea in the 'Expositio in Psalmos' (C Psalms) – God uses the elements not to give the impression of natural processes, but to express through them the character of celestial power superior to the laws of nature.[29] However, one point made by Chrysostom above is that part of the difficulties in interpreting the Old Testament can be found in the problems of text, tradition and translation. He says that it really is not only the crudity of those to whom it is addressed, but that the unreliability of the Septuagint and the linguistic limitations of the first translators are to blame.[30] Chrysostom is concerned that anyone could question Scripture because of the apparent difficulty of some of its messages, he wants to convey that mistakes and misunderstandings originate much rather with its human users and administrators.[31] One should again consider that Chrysostom with his explanations of these terms and images from the Old Testament follows standard exegesis, these are not independent interpretations, a fact not easily remembered as we watch him taking his audience through a lively thought process of questions, answers, and possibilities.

In the end, it is the mechanism of the human mind with its limited potential of identification that leads, according to Chrysostom, to one of the main characteristics of the divine/heavenly images chosen, and to the possible and likely source of the God-*basileus* parallel:

> I did not appear, He [God] says, such as I am, but I have taken a figure which the beholder can see. Thus you see him in turns sitting (Isaiah 6.1), carrying arms (Isaiah 34.6), having white horses (Daniel 7.9), appearing in a slight wind (3 Kings 19.12-13), or in fire (Exodus 3.2), showing himself from behind, placed above the Cherubim (1 Samuel

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[29] C Psalms 145.2: PG55.402: BIX.565.

[30] De prophetiarum obscuritate II.1-2: PG56.176-178: BX.375-378.

[31] Kaczynski, *Wort Gottes* on p.33 documents this attitude, and remarks that Chrysostom's 'Widerspruchslösungsversuche' are not always successful. On p.142 he discusses 'das Problem der Dunkelheit des Alten Testaments (*ἀσάφεια*)'.

4.4; Isaiah 37.16).... Why he thus appears in turns in arms and covered in blood, in fire,.... in heaven, on a throne, above the Cherubim, this is not the place to say, if one does not want to attribute undue importance to what is an accessory. Why, then, does he appear sitting on a throne, and with the Seraphim? He imitates a human custom, so that his message may also come across to humans.
C Isaiah 4.1: SC304.258

Chrysostom in such passages seemingly homes in on this problem of the *basileus* as a metaphor, but in actual fact he himself then uses this metaphor to explain the mechanisms of human imagination:

It is true that we have the faith, but eye and ear are not enough to comprehend the miracle in its greatness. When hearing of *basileis*, we admire the purple and the diadem and the golden clothes and the royal throne, but are we not more greatly affected when we see them surrounded by their courtiers, presiding over their ranks from high?
Daemones non gubernare mundum I.2: PG49-50.247: BIII.417

Here clearly 'hearing of the *basileis*' is introduced merely as a parallel to worshipping God who is above all.[32] Why '*basileus*' is a convenient title in this respect he himself makes clear when he compares it to its uses on earth:

When we want to speak of the *basileus* of the Persians, we do not call him simply '*basileus*', but we add 'of the Persians' or 'of the Armenians', as it depends. But when we speak of our *basileus*, any addition is unnecessary...as there is no other God who is *basileus*. And furthermore he who expresses himself thus [David] was a *basileus* himself, again proof that he did not want to speak of a human, but of the God of the Universe. Also, he does not say '*basileus*' but 'the *basileus*', expressing by the article the greatest lordship.
C Psalms 44.1: PG55.184: BIX.184

This passage also legitimates Chrysostom when he occasionally introduces '*basileus*' as a metaphor for God without further warning or explanation. But it is not even merely a human pattern that is adopted by the divine in order to make itself more comprehensible to humans. The emotions of humans are also catered for when Chrysostom interprets John 14.29:

'Do you think that I cannot pray to the Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?' - He speaks to the secret thoughts of the hearers; since nobody not even in the height of madness, would say that he was not able to help himself, but needed angels. But because they thought of him as of a man, therefore he spoke of twelve legions of angels.
C John 75.4: PG59.408AB

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[32] Kaczynski, *Wort Gottes*, p.62, remarks: 'Unter Diskussionen bildhafter Aussagen Gottes taucht '*basileus*' nicht auf.'

Something is employed to make the disciples, and Chrysostom's flock, feel safe about their God, whom they cannot envisage as not needing material defence. But that this is also a little bit undesirable, that the divine didactic effort has to go further is also demonstrated. Allowance had to be made for the human inclination to measure even God by human standards - that was, it seems, an interim solution. Commenting on John 1.59, Chrysostom points to beyond that interim:

> Do you see how he [Christ] leads him up little by little from the earth, and causes him no longer to imagine him a man? For one to whom angels minister, and on whom angels ascend and descend, how could he be man?
> **C John 21.1: PG59.128D-129A**

The interesting phenomenon is that although Chrysostom describes the divine here as attempting to lead the human mind out of this identification of divine matters with human standards, he himself still uses earthly terminology in this passage - 'angels minister'. But probably for him that is progress from 'hosts of angels serving around the throne' - which prompts us to accept a possible distinction between general and specific terminology. The assumption that his awareness of exactly what terminology is used in what circumstances can be acute is supported by his attitude to the devil pirating phrases that should only be used for the divine:

> But that you also see his [the devil's] foolishness in what he says, listen to this: 'Above the stars of heaven I will set my throne, and will be equal to the most High.' (Isaiah 14.14). What could be more foolish than such speech?
> **C Romans 21.4: PG60.600BC**

Next to the crime of usurping equality with God, Chrysostom sees the danger of identifying turns of speech too much with particular values. He once advocates that with proper care any confusion should be avoided: '...above all Scripture has the custom of explaining the metaphors it uses...'.[33] One might consider it a bold statement that Scripture always signals when it uses a metaphor, and how this metaphor is to be translated. An explanation might be that probably this statement is coloured by Chrysostom's own conception and employment of metaphor. Certainly his passages on this topic are not few compared with earlier authors, even given his greater bulk of writings. And they seem to indicate a great awareness of the potential - positive and negative

[33] C Isaiah 8.3: SC304.350-52.

- of metaphors and images when applied to spiritual entities like the divine. The parallel man-God, court-heaven is only one of the metaphors Chrysostom uses as examples, but it is a central one, and many other details are part of it.

There is one other important side to Chrysostom's use of figurative speech. So far he has been cited as explaining it as a means towards intellectual understanding of divine properties. But that is by no means all he wishes to achieve with his preaching. He wants to excite the soul, wants his flock to yearn and long for spiritual improvement, and such processes are to be defined as emotional rather than rational. It is extremely rare to find Chrysostom explaining how he guides his flock into having these feelings. One little passage gives away that he was not unaware of this emotional process. He introduces an alternative to the God-*basileus* parallel, where God behaves like parents:

> Parents have the same behaviour to their children. When they are still little, they give them...shoes, clothes, gold ornaments, bracelets; but when they are older, they replace these gifts with objects of greater importance, they seek to get them glory, eloquence, fame amongst their fellow citizens, credit in royal palaces...God behaves like that to us...inspiring love for the promised celestial goods.
> **C Psalms 4.10: PG55.55: BVIII.576**

So emotions that are in themselves un-Christian – ambition, lust for material rewards, pride – are nevertheless used as a descriptive parallel of the spiritual process God wants to encourage in us.[34] Chase also finds Chrysostom, when intending to induce spiritual exertion and progress, introducing a system of rewards which he himself condemns as materialistic in any other context.[35] This element can be traced in many of the quotes analyzed in the subsequent chapters - Chrysostom condemns ambition and greed, but nevertheless uses these elements of the human character for his pastoral purposes. It is almost impossible to determine how conscious he was of doing so. The need to employ didactic means was recognized by him. Negligence in faith is once diagnosed to be the cause of an earthquake; while a superstitious explanation of this natural phenomenon is not unclassical, we do not know whether Chrysostom here simply responds to the beliefs of his

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[34] Th. Nikolaou, *Der Neid bei Johannes Chrysostomus*, Abhandlungen zur Philosophie, Psychologie und Pädagogik 56 (Bonn, 1969) catalogues Chrysostom's statements on envy, but not how he himself uses it in his preaching.

[35] Chase, *Chrysostom*, p.46.

flock.[36] When Paul states 'I have personified these things in myself and in Apollo, because of you', Chrysostom explains this as a pedagogical trick, like getting a child to swallow its medicine.[37] And there is one passage that seems to show to what an extent the *basileus* is simply responding to his own definition:

> If it comes to saying in enthusiastic tones that the *basileus* wears a cloak radiant with gold, we are far from sharing in this sentiment of admiration, we employ these expressions with a smile on our lips, because we see nothing out of the ordinary there...a hermit has more glory than someone born in the purple.
> **Adversus oppugnatores vitae monasticae 2.6: PG47-48.340: BI.124-125**

At least according to this statement, Chrysostom's own attitude to the *basileus* is neither positive nor negative - the *basileus* simply is as he is.

There are two other aspects of Chrysostom's use of figurative speech which I would like to illustrate. By the example of a longer passage, one can see how he combines the *basileus* with an ingredient of Antiochene daily life to make a complicated point:

> Tell me, I beg of you: if one were to ask you to take possession of an earthly kingship, and if prior to entering your capital and putting on the diadem it were necessary to tarry a little while in some miserable inn, full of noise and smoke, packed with travellers, exposed to the activities of thieves and offering nothing but bother and embarrassment - would you worry about these discomforts, or would you not consider them negligible? Would it not be senseless to pay any attention to bothers that have to be borne, if one is called to the royal rule and full of the brightest hopes. And, if one is appointed to the kingdom of the heavens, [would it not be senseless] to give oneself to depression and worry, for every discomfort one might suffer at that inn. For, in reality, the present life is no different.
> **Ad Stagirium a daemone vexatum III.1: PG47-48.471: BI.348**

The passage illustrates very well just how evocatively Chrysostom can describe. The audience can almost picture the scene. Both Chrysostom and his flock know what inns are like, and Antioch had many establishments outside its gates catering for the needs of passing tradesmen and military personnel.[38] The colour of the image almost obliterates the message. The inn is life on earth, the palace inside the city is the heavenly kingdom, the

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[36] De Lazaro VI.1: PG47-48.1027: BII.644.

[37] C I Corinth. 12.1, PG61.96: BXVI.464.

[38] Liebeschuetz, *Antioch*, p.77.

glorious afterlife. But there is only one person - the believer, the individual member of Chrysostom's flock, who both figures as the normal human being becoming - by some miraculous fate - the *basileus*, and as the normal human being becoming an inhabitant of heaven.

Another example shows how Chrysostom's abrupt metaphorical use of the basileus results in a potentially misleading message:

> What was the cause of this triumph [of Christianity]?...a divine power...one must conclude that when thinking of the opposing forces. In fact, here you see the opposite to such values: wealth, nobility, patriotism, rhetorical training, material security, established religious veneration...and if those of the opposite camp carried victory, what is the reason, tell me? All happened as if a *basileus*, with well equipped armies and entering a pitched battle, could not triumph over barbarians...
> **De laudibus sancti Pauli 4.13: SC300.210-12**

The position of the explanation introduced by 'as if' seems to indicate that the *basileus* with his armies stands for wealth, nobility and this entire group of values, while the invincible barbarians stand for the triumphant Christians. Because of this apparent pairing, one could interpret this passage as a rejection of classical life and with it its form of rule. But this conclusion becomes questionable when one considers the context. The text is on St. Paul, and the discussion of St. Paul, especially in view of his fate at the hands of Nero, often prompted Chrysostom to a negative evaluation of 'the *basileus*', and to seeing Christianity as if it was still endangered in a pagan world.[39]

Another thought that should be considered is whether there are other images that could have been used by Chrysostom to make these points. But an image or metaphor is usually chosen because it responds well to certain characteristics of the thing it represents, or to the way in which several things interrelate. Also, the Antiochene tradition of exegesis refused to use opaque images and figures of speech. Thus one finds the royal metaphor used by Chrysostom in a question of hierarchy and sequence even to explain another image he also used:

> The head is honourable, but it cannot say to the feet 'I have no need of you'...and the same applies to all relations in life. The *basileus*, for instance, has need of his subjects, and the subjects of the *basileus*, just as the head has need of the feet.

[39] See Chapters 6 and 13 for more extensive discussion.

The parallel between the body and the hierarchy of the realm should be kept in mind, it is prominent again in the sixth century.[40] A hierarchical context is also implied in another statement: the difference between royal and poor life is not as great as between heavenly and earthly glory.[41] If it is not the pattern of hierarchy that is used, it is the general aloofness and desirability of kingship and its environment. Someone who loses the heavens because of greed is comparable to someone who loses the greatest honour at the royal court, proudly owning a heap of manure instead.[42] And the uniqueness of kingship is emphasized in the homilies on John, where it is related how the disciples would have been offended at what happened to Christ had they always understood him to be a *basileus*.[43] In both instances, the spiritual level is present. It proves surprisingly difficult to keep the royal metaphor away from it.

This thesis is devoted to the rich variety of imperial elements Chrysostom enlists in describing and illustrating the nature and behaviour of the divine. Some of these descriptions are the most defined and accurate found yet in any author. The analysis of his attitude towards figurative speech and its application, however, shows that any pretence to reality of these descriptions must remain strictly limited to the earthly level. Real heaven in Chrysostom's mind is an immaterial realm of spiritual elements, whose individual definition determines their relationship to each other.

What are the conclusions one can draw? Does Chrysostom have a continuing awareness of how influential his metaphors and images are on mental processes? The evidence seems to illustrate such an awareness, but on the other hand one must weigh these few reminders against the entire mass of his works, against the hundreds of times when he does use these metaphors without these qualifications.

Are the qualifications he makes here consistent? Short as this chapter is, it introduced almost as many slightly varying definitions and explanations on Chrysostom's part as there were items of evidence. For the first time of many

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[40] *F.C. Corippus – In Laudem Justini Augusti Minoris*, ed. + transl. Averil Cameron (London, 1976), Book II, p.53 f.: l.185 ff.

[41] C Romans 15.9: PG60.536D.

[42] C Matthew 63.4: PG57-58.608CD.

[43] C John 66.2: PG59.367B.

one has to draw attention to the fact that each of these remarks, these statements, was made in a different didactic situation, and in connection with a different subject matter, a different biblical text. It almost seems to me that with contemporary Neoplatonists, allegory had a system and an intellectual significance, expanding meaning, while for Chrysostom the significance is purely pedagogical and serves to define meaning.[44] The aim seems to be the same, though - to vindicate the language and imagery not only of Scripture, but also of the Christian instructor, to alert his audience, albeit very rarely, to the fundamental difficulty he faces: explaining to humans what defies human parameter of any description.[45] That is a juncture where the theologian has the choice primarily between apophatic and kataphatic theology, between the methods of definition and of description. Chrysostom is aware of the apophatic possibility, simply because of his stating that the divine really cannot be described. His concern, though, is not with theologians, but with Christians who need to turn into daily life what they hear, and he also states that they need something more mentally tangible to take away with them. This attitude defines him as a teacher rather than a theologian, and this in turn conditions most, if not all, evaluations this study attempts to make of his statements. In examining what use he has for metaphor, one has set the modus for interpreting his parallel of God and the *basileus*.

The other observation that should be taken away from this chapter is the overriding importance of Scripture and its formulations for Chrysostom. The range of Chrysostom's images is for the most part based on Scripture and not invented by himself. This raises the question whether in all his metaphors and comparisons he might not simply be quoting and imitating Scripture. If this was the case, this study would be redundant. One would only have to state that both the elements and the variety of Chrysostom's images mirror Scripture, with all its idiosyncrasies which Chrysostom himself analyses so ably in the quotes discussed in this chapter. In one respect this is true. Chrysostom follows the same didactic principles as Scripture – the overriding aim is to make his audience understand what is being expounded at a given moment. The explanations given at that moment to achieve understanding

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[44] You needed to know the catalogue of images used by the Neoplatonists - Coulter, *Microcosm* lists that code partly on p.71, *e.g.* cup = Dionysius.

[45] P. Yousif, "Typologie und Eucharistie bei Ephrem dem Syrer und Thomas von Aquin", Typos, Allegorie, Symbol..., ed. M. Schmidt and C.F. Geyer, *Eichstätter Beiträge* 4 (1982) p.78 quotes Ephraim: 'Aller Bilder bediente er [Gott] sich, damit die Menschen nach Kraft und Vermögen sie erfassen möchten' - Ephraim HdF 26.6.

need not be the same as those employed in another situation – this explains the controversies both in Scripture and in Chrysostom's preaching.

It is where the elements used in these explanations are concerned that Chrysostom differs from Scripture. He does use biblical allegories and staple images. But the study will show that he is still not simply adopting scriptural imagery. First of all, he uses his loans from Scripture in totally different and sometimes highly explosive contexts which gives them a higher degree of intensity. Secondly, his quotations are rarely as correct as he himself would probably like them to be.[46] And around kernels of direct quotations Chrysostom enlarges his own version of the images in question, again driven by his pedagogical talent. Metaphors become enlarged, parallels are spun out, contemporary colouring is added. In this way, scriptural images *are* really turned into Chrysostom's very own, very diverse and distinctive catalogue of images - a catalogue this study wants to reconstruct at least where heaven and the *basileus* are concerned. In these conditions frequent consultation of Scripture when reading Chrysostom or about him is necessary to become aware of these departures which I have not always pointed out. The observations made by the scholars cited under Note 46 also bear out that while Chrysostom does not derive his imagery from nowhere, the imagery found in his texts is highly individualized. Chrysostom makes it respond to the needs of his audience, and to the direction of his current interpretation. His additions to and combination of established imagery - established by Scripture, previous exegesis, or even classical language - turn the imagery in his texts into a powerful statement that must be examined in its own right, which is the object of this thesis as far as the image of the *basileus* is concerned. What cannot be attempted at the same time is to research how unique this considerable emancipation was, and how it influenced later and very much later readers and writers.

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[46] F.T. Gignac, "The Text of Acts in Chrysostom's Homilies", *Traditio* 26 (1970) 308-314, found in total 819 variants from Scripture just when Chrysostom quotes Acts. Words and phrases are frequently omitted or added, synonyms are substituted – p.310. And: 'The large number of stray, unsupported variants suggests a freedom with the text more understandable in *ex tempore* delivery than in a prepared, written address, and the very inconsistency observable in the re-quotations seems to reflect the role of memory.' - p.315. G.D. Fee, "The Text of John and Mark in the Writings of Chrysostom", *New Testament Studies* 26 (1980) 525-547, p.547 adds to that that Chrysostom's variations also help to establish the biblical text influencing subsequent Byzantine versions. K. Ottosson, "Love of God in Saint John Chrysostom's Commentary on the Fourth Gospel", *Church Quarterly Review* 166 (1965) 315-323, p.316, also made the following observation: 'When Chrysostom uses Scripture, he uses it verse by verse, and is perfectly content to take a single verse apparently in isolation from its context, and comment on it, and read into it whatever he feels it to be saying'.

It has, I think, become apparent in this chapter that the principles that governed Chrysostom's preaching also govern, to a degree, his catalogue of images that are based on the *basileus*. His strong instinct for and enjoyment of the adaptability and variety of images vindicates my attempts at thematic classification. But before this classification begins in earnest, one chapter will be devoted to showing just this variety by cataloguing what aspects of the life of earthly rulers are employed in Chrysostom's metaphorical language.

4 The *Basileus* and his Environment

> Open the gates of heaven, and not only of heaven, but of the heavens of the heavens, and behold, you will see what I am going to describe to you. That which is most precious in heaven, I will show you here on earth. What is it that is most precious in a palace? The walls? The golden roofs? Obviously not, it is the *basileus* sitting on his throne. In heaven, it is just the same, it is the body of the *basileus* which is the most beautiful ornament. Well, this body you can see down on earth. It is not the angels, nor the archangels, nor the heavens, nor the heavens of the heavens, but the Lord and Master that I am going to show you. Thus, it is given to you to behold on earth the most adorable and precious object, you not only see him, but touch him, you not only touch it, but eat it, and you carry it with you to your homes. Thus, purify your souls, and prepare for the reception of these mysteries. If one were to give to you the son of a *basileus* to carry in the fullness of his power and royalty, you would be full of scorn for all the affairs down here. And now, when you receive not only the son of a *basileus*, but the son of God, you do not tremble?
> **C I Corinth. 24.5: PG61.205-206: BXVII.28**

This is the kind of description one envisages when looking for the God-*basileus* metaphor. It introduces a pageant of separate images against the background of an apparently straightforward comparison of God governing the universe with the earthly ruler. And even in the introductory aspects discussed so far, the examples used gave a taste of what is to come - different variations and modes of explaining the divine hierarchy, heavenly conditions, elements of Christian life by comparing them with the conditions of imperial rule and environment and with the characteristics of the earthly ruler. Why Chrysostom chose the earthly *basileis* as a model has been reconnoitred in the previous chapter. This chapter wants to show the range of attributes of the earthly *basileus* which Chrysostom absorbs into the basic God-*basileus* metaphor. And in doing that, it wants to introduce some of the contexts in which Chrysostom resorts to this metaphor. The basic patterns of his models can be best established by looking at simple, pure comparisons between a *basileus* and the divine level, as exemplified by the quote above. That is, the *basileus* has a neutral quality, it is not explicitly stated to which period he belongs, who he is, and whether he corresponds to a real ruler at all.

Hence the aim of this chapter is to explore the mechanics of this metaphor, to take stock of what areas of earthly rule are compared to divine activities, and to establish the conventions of these comparisons, how Chrysostom usually

works them. The end result should be a range of possible ingredients and variations of Chrysostom's God-*basileus* comparisons. Having established such parameters, one can then turn to the instances where Chrysostom specified his metaphors and images attaching moral evaluations and biblical and historical references to the *basileus*.

Paraphrasing God in the terms of imperial ceremonial is the kind of evidence one would immediately pay attention to under the theme of this study. Again, the quote opening the chapter is a prime example and seemingly continues the tradition of Eusebius' statement 'The emperor is like God' in the 'Tricennial Orations'. Chrysostom often employs a ceremonial context, and one of the questions is where, in his Antioch days, he found the descriptive detail which seems to form the base for some of these passages. The problem will become apparent already in the following passage:

> Make yourself a picture of the splendour of an earthly *basileus*: an entourage of men covered in gold, a team of white mules with gold-glimmering reins, cushions of snowy white for the carriages, sheets of gold to decorate the carriage, figures of dragons stitched in silken covers, shields with golden humps, and from those stream thongs studded with gems, horses studded with gold and golden reins. But when we behold the *basileus* himself, we spare no further glance for all those things. We are enthralled just by his appearance, his purple cloak, the diadem, his seat, the shoulder clasp, the shoes, his sparkling glance. Have all that before your mental eye, but then direct your thoughts upwards, to that terrible day when Christ will appear. Then you will not see teams of mules, and no golden carriages and dragons and shields, but events so fearsome and awful that even the heavenly powers will tremble. For it is said: 'The powers of heaven will be shaken'(Matthew 24.29). Then all heaven will open up, and the gates of the vaults open themselves, the only-begotten son will descend, surrounded not with twenty or a hundred lancebearers, but with thousands and tens of thousands of angels, archangels, Cherubim, Seraphim and other heavenly powers. There everything is full of terror and fear, the earth opens up, and all men from Adam to that day rise up, are transported and put themselves up before Christ, who appears in such a glory, that sun and moon and any light pale before such splendour.
> **C Romans 15.10: PG60.537D-538A**

This is by no means an isolated description, and its variations will reappear in the course of subsequent chapters.[1] It is also not unusual that the element of '*adventus*', one of the most important imperial ceremonials, is tied to that of

[1] There is a reason for not congregating all the passages involving this ceremonial scene with white mules and carriages and related elements. The image occurs several times, identical almost to a word, but it is used in different combinations, to illustrate different issues. It therefore illustrates the flexibility of the metaphor, and how Chrysostom sometimes made images fit different contexts almost at random.

the second coming. In the introductory chapter on Chrysostom's life in Antioch attention was drawn to the almost continuous imperial presence in the city from the 340s onwards. Whether the emperors were pious or ignominious, the ceremonial surrounding them will have had the population of Antioch as an audience, and this includes Chrysostom. He shows that he was informed in detail about Julian's ritual activities trying to revive the cult of Apollo in Daphne in his 'De s. Babyla contra Julianum et gentiles' - surely he was equally acquainted with the ceremonial of the albeit not-so-glamorous soldier emperors using Antioch as a residence. In the chapter concentrating on Antioch a reference was also made to the ceremonial surrounding the governor's arrival in the city, based on elements of imperial adventus.[2] The *adventus* theme appears frequently. Here it is seen with the eyes of those receiving the *basileus*:

> Just as when a city receives a *basileus*, those with important positions and honours or in favour with him, will go to meet him before the city, while the guilty and criminal remain in the city under guard, awaiting the sentence of the *basileus*: just so when the Lord will come, those in his grace will go to meet him in the airs, but those guilty or with a conscience laden with many crimes will await their judge on the earth.
> **In ascensionem 5: PG49-50.450-451: BIV.96-97**

Similar circumstances are expressed in another text – those who are in honour go out and meet him, the condemned wait within the city.[3] But the *basileus* is not only described as the focus of a glittering display. His practical functions are also seen in comparison with a higher plane. Chrysostom adapts Christ's thoughts about the tax collector (Matthew 17.25-26), where he states that He must be exempted, being both the son of a heavenly *basileus*, and a *basileus* Himself.[4] Chrysostom does not frequently mention taxes. Christ is here exempted from taxation because he is a *basileus* and the son of a *basileus*. That a *basileus* raises taxes is not in itself seen negatively. The heavenly *basileus* also demands 'taxes', but they consist of other offerings, voluntary and according to the means of the giver, as has been seen in another passage on taxation, where the point was that in contrast to earthly bureaucracy every donation to God is an investment.[5]

There are two more interesting passages concerning the individual behaviour of the *basileus* outside the context of a ceremony. They both have a faintly

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[2] See p. 50.

[3] C I Thess. VII.1: PG62.440: LF14.418.

[4] C Matthew 58.1: PG57-58.567B.

[5] See p. 51, and see p.82 for another reference to taxation.

military background and show earthly and heavenly *basileus* concerned with practical considerations. Again, the earthly *basileus* has his limitations, but so far without detriment to his moral value, something that is important to stress:

> Do you see the splendour of the city, how it illuminates you from the beginning with light? How it immediately revealed the *basileus* to you in your own guise, just as in an army camp? For there [in a camp] the *basileus* does not always show himself in his royal dignity, but often doffs his diadem and purple and dons the guise of a soldier. But there he does this lest by being recognized he should draw the enemy unto himself, while here the opposite is the case - lest by being recognized he should prepare the flight of the enemy before the engagement against him, and lest he confuse all of his own side. For he wants to save, not to frighten.
> **C Matthew 2.2: PG57-58.26C**

There is no evidence suggesting that Chrysostom ever witnessed a battle. But Antioch was winter camp for the Persian and Syrian campaigns of the fourth century, the countryside immediately outside the city counted as uncertain battlefield. Furthermore, the *topos* of a *basileus*, or political leader, at the head of his army in battle is abundantly found in classical literature, and Issos, where Darius threw off his royal insignia in flight, is nearby.[6] That the image of the *basileus* in battle recurs so frequently in Chrysostom's work may also reflect the fact that to command the imperial army against frontier invasions was a definitive characteristic of the late fourth century emperors before Arcadius and Honorius.[7] But to return to this specific passage: his limitations force the earthly *basileus* into a more drab representation of his person. But the heavenly *basileus* hides his splendour because to show it would disturb the dispensation concerning evil, and would be too much for his own army. Another aspect of the splendour of the heavenly *basileus* can of course be that he does not need it to make an impact, as the earthly one does.[8] But heavenly and earthly *basileus* can be on a more equal footing:

> Just because of this God wants you to have to exert yourself a little, so that it is really your victory. Also an earthly *basileus* lets his own son stand in the battle ranks and wants him to be seen there, to be able to ascribe the victory to him, although he does everything himself.
> **C Matthew 16.11: PG57-58.254B**

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[6] The extent of Chrysostom's classical education is best described by Baur I, p.8-10.

[7] F. Millar, "Government and Diplomacy in the Roman Empire during the First Three Centuries", *International History Review* 10 (1988) 345-377, p.376. Whether Chrysostom had any particular emperor in mind who changed his dress during battle cannot be established, although Valens at Adrianople might be a possibility.

[8] C Matthew 54.6: PG57-58.539C.

Despite a faint possibility of self-salvation, God and *basileus* in the end pull the strings. One should also note that while God and the earthly *basileus* are portrayed as thinking along the same lines, man gets elevated and compared to a royal prince - man's status before God is the same as that of a prince before a *basileus*. And the problem of the royalty of man in so far as it is relevant to this enquiry will be discussed in greater detail in a different context. There is a final passage lifting this *topos* into a different context, and showing how important it was to Chrysostom. He describes how the apostles have to take courage after Christ's death to travel in his name, and introduces an observation of human behaviour. Even outnumbered armies are strong as long as they see their *basileus* alive, and scatter when he dies.[9]

The hierarchy of power surrounding the *basileus* often appears in Chrysostom. The earthly *basileus* surrounded by his guards and counsellors compared to the heavenly *basileus* is described in several variations.

> For if we long to know what is going on in the palaces, what, for instance, he who rules (ὁ βασιλεύων) has said, what he has done, what counsel he is taking concerning his subjects, though in truth these things are for the most part nothing to us, much more is it desirable to hear what God has said, especially when all concerns us. And all this will this man tell us exactly, as being a friend of the *basileus* himself...
> **C John 1.3: PG59.26C-D**

The relations are made clear in this passage (also the importance of 'connections'- a friend of the *basileus*!). The *basileus* in his palace, deciding with his advisers, is already a world apart, elevated from his subjects, whose interest in these proceedings is futile to a degree. But this interest is more encouraged when God is concerned, because his planning is more important to man. Palace and counsellors of God are in this passage only implied, not spelt out. But they appear in Chrysostom's 'Catecheses' as saints who surround the *basileus* of the heavens, and these bystanders have the power of intercession.[10] In his 'De incomprehensibili dei natura', this relationship is different, evidently the bystanders are not saints who were once human, but are heavenly beings. They do not become acquainted with the design of the *basileus*, it is only with and through man that the powers above learn of it, a process which is based on the importance of man in the entire ideology of

[9] C I Corinth. V.4: PG61.43: BXVI.374.
[10] Catecheses ad illuminandos 7.4: SC50.231.

salvation.[11] The counterpart to these descriptions of the heavenly court is found in a passage dealing with people in the service of the earthly *basileus*:

> For there are many and different ways of serving in general, and of serving God in particular. Just as with *basileis* all [people] are subject to one ruler, but not all render the same service - the one is in the army, the other in the city, a third manages the finances - it is the same in spiritual things: the one honours God and serves Him by believing and managing his life well, the other by accommodating strangers, a third by looking after the poor. It was just like that with the apostles...
> **C Romans 3.2: PG60.402D**

It reminds one of passages found in the Cappadocian Fathers describing the division of the earth amongst angels, but here the half-human, half-angelic apostles fill this function. There is another interesting comparison involving rank. Interpreting Matthew 11.10, Chrysostom says that 'sending my angels before you' simply means being close to God - because just as those closer to the carriage of the *basileus* are higher in rank, John the Baptist appears close to the Lord's arrival.[12] This frequent appearance of the carriage as the focus of power of the mobile *basileus*, a counterpart to the throne, points again to the assumption that Chrysostom during his Antioch days must have been witness to some ceremonial processions.[13]

But there are also references to the power of the *basileus* spreading through his realm independently of his person. The following passage illustrates this along with a frequent characteristic of Chrysostom's 'comparison': the parallel God-*basileus* often involves a flying change of levels, one half of the comparison still being on an earthly level, but not concluded or explained there, rather taken straight into the spiritual:

> Since wherever the letters of the *basileus* are, not engraved on a pillar of brass, but stamped by the Holy Ghost on God-loving minds, and bright with abundant grace, that [evil one] will not be able to even look at them.
> **C John 3.1: PG59.38C**

A similar process takes place in the homilies given in connection with the riot of 386/387.[14] But there it is not only power in the terms of 'the writing of the *basileus*' that is illustrated - the city of Jerusalem is not able to escape the wrath even of an earthly *basileus*, and much less the wrath of God. The city

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[11] De incomprehensibili dei natura 4: SC28.218.

[12] C Matthew 37.2: PG57+58.421A.

[13] It also appears in C Romans 15.10: PG60.537D-538A. See p.77.

[14] Statues 17.13: PG49-50.178D.

in relation to the *basileus* and his power plays of course a major part in the homilies on the riot of 387 - their whole theme is the disregard some Antiochene citizens showed for the geographically remote supremacy of the emperor, whose effigies they damaged and partially destroyed. Chrysostom has to walk a knife's edge between encouraging his downcast flock and at the same time proving loyal to imperial ideology. As always, he also manages to make the main issue of his preaching a castigating exhortation to commitment to God, deftly exploiting the emotional state of his audience while keeping to the theme of the emperor's power, although on a different subject. The following passage gives an inkling of this:

> For behold, the inhabitants of the city were commanded to bring in a payment of gold, such as it might have seemed beyond the power of many to do; yet the greater part of the sum has been collected, and you may hear the tax gatherers saying 'Why delay, man? Why put us off from day to day? It is not possible to avoid it. It is the law of the basileus, which admits of no delay.' What do you say, I ask? The basileus has commanded you to bring in your money, and it is impossible not to bring it in! God has commanded you to avoid oaths! And how do you say, it is impossible to avoid them!
> **Statues 8.6:PG49-50.102B-C**[15]

One might also realize that taxation appears here figuring in an emphatically pro-*basileus* comparison.[16] It is such proceedings, the remote action of the emperors expressing themselves in taxation and administrative measures, which are most likely to be Chrysostom's experiences of '*basileus*' in real life. However, he also displays 'knowledge' of events taking place in the immediate aura of the *basileus*, and describes the atmosphere of the palace. This does not mean detailed descriptions of the buildings themselves. It is more the relationship between the *basileus* and the wider circle of courtiers - *i.e.* not the close advisers and bystanders discussed already in some passages. Chrysostom spends a lot of effort on describing the correct behaviour one should adopt in the presence of either *basileus* or God, starting with details like posture. Chrysostom describes how one expresses veneration of the earthly *basileus* 'by the deportment of one's head and tone of voice, folding one's hands and keeping one's feet together, in adjusting one's whole body...' and how the incorporeal powers do just the same.[17]

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[15] This fits in with the other statements involving divine taxation made on p.78.

[16] As in C Matthew 58.1: PG57+58.567B close to the beginning of the chapter.

[17] C Uzziah 1.3: SC277.60. These details fit in with what we know about late antique ceremonial. Treitinger, *Oströmische Reichsidee* mentions the silent atmosphere in the palace - p.52. On p.63-66 he describes the importance of crossed or covered hands when approaching the emperor.

On looking closely, one finds it is not man before *basileus* or God, but man before *basileus* and heavenly powers before God, *i.e.* a direct, symmetrical comparison. This symmetry may be ideal for the purposes of this study, but it is not standard. The comparison can also be man-*basileus*, man-God. In the homilies on John, Chrysostom describes how to arrive slovenly in the heavenly sphere among angels is just like introducing a harlot into an earthly palace or getting drunk, and he points to the known consequences of such behaviour.[18] And elsewhere he compares approaching the heavenly *basileus* with an evil-smelling soul to approaching an earthly *basileus* with bad breath.[19] Or the offence consists of dragging in a body for burial in the palace and spreading a stench in the holiest of heavens.[20] There also is an interesting passage where Chrysostom, endeavouring to discipline his audience in church, represents church and mass as heaven:

> Do you not see that also in royal palaces all noise is banned and deep silence reigns everywhere? You too are like entering a royal palace, not an earthly one, but a much more awful one - the palace of the*basileus* in the heavens, therefore behave with greatest modesty. For you stand amidst the choir of angels, you are the companion of archangels and sing with the Seraphim. All these choirs show greatest reverence in their attitude and sing before God with a holy awe, the*basileus* of the universe, their mystical song and the holy hymns.
> **C Matthew 19.3: PG57+58.277.C**

Finally there are passages where even the man in the street happens to come into proximity with royalty. In his manifesto-like 'Sermo cum presbyter fuit ordinatus'.[21] Chrysostom is convinced that poor people have a dream of being seated at a royal banquet, and this fact he exploits for his pedagogical purposes. The emphasis is therefore usually on the honour of an invitation to the palace - equal either to the decision of a man to devote himself totally to a spiritual life, or a man 'dying', his soul being called off - and the foolishness of being sad about such an occasion. This 'invitation' can also be to a wedding, the wedding of the son of a *basileus* (Christ), emphasizing the spiritual union the soul is about to enter.[22] In a variation on this theme a *basileus* celebrates the wedding of his son and perceives a man with improper clothes - that man is punished and thrown into the outer shadows, which is a reminder that the soul has to be in proper state when wishing to enter this

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[18] C John 5.4: PG59.60B-C. The passage also appears on p.56.

[19] C Ephesians 3.4: PG62 .28CD. The passage also appears on p.56.

[20] C Matthew 73.3: PG57+58.676C. The passage also appears on p.56.

[21] Sermo cum presbyter fuit ordinatus 1: PG47-48.693.

[22] C Matthew 69.1: PG57+58.647D-648C.

spiritual union.[23] In 'Ad illuminandos catechesis' this is summed up even more evocatively: 'do you not go to some length to buy the proper clothes even at a temporal wedding? Before taking your place at the royal banquet, watch which wedding gown you have to purchase' - the requirements for the preparation of the soul are translated into stringent social customs.[24] Or the image takes the shape of being asked to watch a wrestling match alongside *basileis* and governors, which is in turn paralleled to being invited to the real faith watching the devil being subdued in company with the *basileus* of angels.[25] And finally the man in the street finding himself in such company is also instructed by Chrysostom how to speak up for himself. No comparison is made, but the heavenly scene is set with earthly props:

> When you are close to the royal antechamber and want then to approach the throne itself where the *basileus* is seated distributing his gifts, exhibit great respect in your requests, ask nothing earthly or human, but something worthy of the donor.
> **Catecheses ad illuminandos 2.29: SC50.149**

Chrysostom seems to be consistently on the side of the man in the street, taking his side, giving him advice. There are only a few passages that differ from this representation. Once there is a notion that poor men are like dogs at the court of the *basileus*.[26] And there is one instance where the poor do not feel inspired to higher things at the sight of splendour, but feel depressed when contemplating riches they can never attain, just like normal souls when seeing the souls of the athletes of faith, the martyrs.[27] However, these two instances are not enough to qualify credibly the overriding impression that in Chrysostom's mind the poor consider the earthly *basileis* as the ultimate aspiration in this visible world, and that he uses this fact to psychological advantage.

While checking these descriptions against the background of what is known of reality, I think it is futile to look for any particular experiences Chrysostom might have had that could have prompted his imagery because there is not enough detail, and the reader is referred to the end of the chapter dealing with Chrysostom's figurative speech for some thoughts on this question. Some of the situations make little sense in a contemporary context because they are

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[23] Adversus oppugnatores vitae monasticae 1.6: PG47-48.327: BI.102.
[24] Ad illuminandos catechesis II.2: PG49-50.234: BIII.396.
[25] C John 32.3: PG59.188A-B.
[26] C I Thess. 11.4: PG62.466-467: LF14.460.
[27] De ss. martyribus 2: PG49-50.648: BIV.398.

based on biblical precedents like the wedding of Cana: few rulers in Chrysostom's day would invite men off the street to join games or feasts. Most of the other situations are really based on the rules that apply for any meeting of parties different in rank - you sit up straight also for your teacher, your parents, your boss, not just for the *basileus*. There is one more 'realistic' passage, but the realism is limited to a negative rendering of careerism:

> If in this moment one were to introduce you at court, if the *basileus* were to address you in front of a big crowd, and were to invite you to partake of his table and his palace, would you not call yourself the most fortunate of men? And when it is a question of you rising to heaven, presenting yourself to the *basileus* of the universe, where the brilliance of the angels sparkles, and there shines inaccessible glory, you ask yourself hesitantly whether you want to renounce the goods of this earth, when you should sacrifice life itself with the greatest outbursts of joy and great happiness and utmost despatch! For obtaining a prefecture where you will find opportunity to commit a host of injustices (for I do not hold that capable of true beneficence) you squander your fortune...you do not hesitate to involve your wife and children - and when you are offered the kingdom of the heavens, a kingdom one is certain of keeping forever, you draw back, you hesitate, and you sigh for riches.
> **De perfecta caritate 6: PG56.286: BX.541**

It seems that here the projection is aimed at, rather than derived from the earthly *basileus*: Chrysostom knows what behaviour he wants his flock to exhibit in the face of God, so he invents similar scenes with the most impressive earthly form of authority he can think of - any *basileus* - not heeding whether the comparison has any real components. Nor does it need to be so real. Above was documented Chrysostom's belief that poor men dream of being invited to court - hence the descriptions trying to turn this emotion to good use in strengthening faith only have to correspond with these dreams rather than with reality. The *basileus* is selected as an image because of that, not because of his intrinsic values or his *raison d'être* in the style of Eusebius.

But Chrysostom does not stop at the rather unlikely man in the street finding himself in royal surroundings. He also moves into more defined relationships between the *basileus* and 'lesser' humans. Prominent here is the theme of the *basileus* and his soldiers, who can be either real soldiers, or the faithful on earth, or the heavenly powers, in conjunction with the respective kind of *basileus*. As a general example:

> For we are soldiers of the *basileus* of heaven, equipped with spiritual weapons. Where the basileus is, there the soldiers shall be. A ruler on earth would not suffer all [soldiers] in his palaces, or even at his side. The *basileus* of the heavens wishes everybody to be close around the royal throne.
> But how, say, can one be on earth and also stand at the throne? Just as Paul was on earth and still also with Seraphim and Cherubim, and even closer to Christ, as those shieldbearers to the *basileus*. These let their eyes be everywhere, while Paul was distracted or lured away by nothing, but always kept his mind concentrated on the *basileus*.
> **C Matthew 54.5: PG57-58.538C-D**

The passage is quite comprehensive. The faithful are soldiers of the heavenly *basileus*. It is important that he has all his soldiers around himself all the time, and this is seen as a positive feature in contrast to the earthly *basileus*. Another detail in which the earthly context forms a negative contrast: the earthly guards looking around them. This undoubtedly was their job - looking at the *basileus* does not help in detecting assassins in the crowds. It is interesting that Chrysostom notes that, but turns it against the earthly court, this time in contrast with St. Paul's powers of concentration.

But then there exists also the simple comparison between the dishonourable earthly soldier who is not allowed to be in the presence of the *basileus* on the one hand, and the less-than-perfect Christian who shares the fate of the foolish virgins on the other.[28] Also a passage can consist of simply observing the dignity of being a soldier, either for the earthly or the heavenly *basileus*, and that the soldier's fate is not meant to be anything but hard in either case.[29] The importance of soldiers is expressed in another text: those who provide soldiers for the *basileus* are honoured like those who prepare servants for the Lord.[30] Finally, the Christian life itself is seen as a war, fighting for the heavenly *basileus*:

> Now our life, too , is a war, the fiercest - a fight, a battle. Therefore our *basileus* orders us to draw up our battle ranks, prepared for wounds, bloodshed and death, he shall see to the salvation of all, strengthen the steadfast and lift up the fallen.
> **C Matthew 59.5: PG57+58.579D-580A**

And Chrysostom refers to both Christian individual and imperial guard when making the statement that if a soldier does not prove worthy of bearing arms, it would be better if he had never entered service, rather than not upholding

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[28] C John 50.3: PG59.282B.

[29] C I Timothy 4.1: PG62.619BC.

[30] Adversus oppugnatores vitae monasticae 3.21:PG47-48.384-385: BI.202.

the honour of his *basileus*.[31] Still, Chrysostom does not concentrate exclusively on the soldier metaphor. Guards are mentioned above, they appear again in a more positive comparison, which has already been cited when describing the context of Chrysostom's preaching in the Great Church - faithful guards are not distracted by the cries of daws and the buzzing of flies.[32] Needless to say, this is yet another disciplinary exhortation aimed at the churchgoers, Chrysostom again equates the church to a palace with the *basileus* present. But there are not only soldiers and guards around the *basileus*, there are also the administrators, helping to govern the empire. God expresses his friendship to humans in posing them challenges in life, just as it is 'the favourites of the *basileus* who in combat face the dangers, exposing themselves to serious injuries and undertaking far expeditions'.[33] This idea - and ideal - of only the favourite friends facing the full responsibility of battle and government with the ruler leads on to the theme of representation and distribution of ~~*basilean*~~ power. Chrysostom spins out a metaphor:

> The apostles are real magistrates chosen by God, not charged with the government of this people and that city in particular, but all the universe together. ...For just as *basileis* sit only in one city ruling and passing law, but the force of these... laws spreads throughout the world...so the apostles sit in one place and pass the law...but the force of those laws spreads not only throughout the world, but also ascends up to the height of the heavens...
> **In principium Actorum III.4: PG51-52.93-94: BV.130-132**

And, in a similar vein, he describes how Christ gave every apostle a task, comparable to a wise *basileus* experienced at putting the right man in the right job.[34] In these passages one apparently has found a parallel to the idea that angels are given specific tasks in governing the universe. This homily, 'In faciem ei restiti', will be discussed at greater length when exploring Chrysostom's affinity to St. Paul in Chapter 13. In it Chrysostom elaborates on the role of the individual apostles.

It is at this point that one should look back over this inventory of what Chrysostom's God-*basileus* metaphor involves and isolate some of the crucial questions. Looking at the quotes at large, one finds that consistent descriptive detail is largely lacking. Does that matter? One must not forget that the soldier-Christian metaphor is one of the most common and well-worn in early

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31 De paenitentia IX.1: PG49-50.343-344: BIII.583.

32 C John 29.3: PG59.172A. The passage had been cited on p.56.

33 C Psalms 7.8: PG55.92: BIX.23.

34 In illud: *In faciem ei restiti* 9: PG51-52.379: BV.589.

Christian literature altogether. As such the soldier even as a mere term, with no descriptive details, would be a familiar image to most audiences. The references to actual guards around the earthly *basileus* are something different, but again they are sufficiently commonplace to be equated with 'soldier' in general. Considering the presence of soldiers and palace guards in Antioch, one may assume that Chrysostom and his audience here share the same visual experiences.

Also scant are any more elaborate references to the spiritual level, except implied through the mention of the heavenly *basileus*. Heavenly powers *en masse* are conspicuous by their absence - they do not seem to figure in the soldier-metaphor with Chrysostom except in conventional images ('armies of angels') elsewhere. He seems to concentrate on the soldier-Christian element.

How positively is the *basileus* really seen? Qualifications already become apparent. The *basileus* shows less glamour, less prestige than with Eusebius. The *basileus* is not God's partner, or God's parallel at an equal level. His dependence on God, and his possible failure in his task, is very pronounced. And not only is the distance between heavenly and earthly court greater than with Eusebius; also the relationship God-man seems superior to that of God-*basileus*, and more important.

I think it became obvious that while these comparisons may be 'abstract' in not referring to any particular ruler, this is not the same as being 'neutral' in the evaluation of the *basileus*- material used. The image of the *basileus* is too strong and inflexible not to invite taking a stance. It always alerts to the question of world order. Chrysostom is totally committed to one theory of world order, the supremacy of Christianity. Human rule is another pattern of world order. Either it integrates itself - or is interpreted as integrated - within the Christian order (which is positive), or it stands alone beside it, and then by necessity is inimical to it. The possibility that both systems or theories coexist apart from each other is never considered. But the prevailing question must be: how aware of these considerations was the audience? How overriding is the impression of pomp and circumstances surrounding the emperor given in some passages, and likened to heavenly conditions? Chrysostom uses the royal metaphor a lot to explain man's relationship to God - as it is or as it should be. Did he do that out of conviction or out of expediency? The evidence discussed so far seems to indicate the latter. A final

answer can only possibly be gained after looking at the wider use of this image in the subsequent chapters.

Appendix: The *basileus* and the city

There are just a few passages involving the *basileus* in specific connection with 'a city'. Despite the obvious connotations with the emperor in his capital or God in the heavenly Jerusalem, one seems to enter a completely separate metaphor here, maybe because both Chrysostom and his flock will think of their own Antioch rather than the capital Constantinople when envisaging 'a city'. There is 'city' as a totally neutral entity, with no heavenly connections:

> Think that you are a *basileus* having a city under his rule - the soul of your child, for that really is a city. And just as in a city there are some that are gangsters, some are honest folk, some work, some are good-for-nothings, so in the soul there are different thoughts and considerations...
> **De inani gloria et de educandis liberis 23: SC188.108-110**

The city-soul parallel used here appears again in another text with more imperial overtones when Chrysostom describes how in a town one wants to keep caged wild animals as far as possible from its nerve centre (was there a zoo at Daphne?), the administrative and palace buildings - but animals in the shape of sinful thoughts we let roam around our soul, which is council hall, administration, palace of ourselves: 'around the mind itself and the royal throne... each of us thus resembling a city after barbarian attack...'.[35] Does Chrysostom think of not too distant Syrian towns under Persian attack? Another interesting point is that the mind = throne connection is apparently superior to soul = palace. There is one instance where Chrysostom links 'city' with 'heaven' in particular connection with the very real fate of Antioch itself during the riots of the statues in 387:

> Then might one see the city likened to heaven, while these saints [the local monks, who came to soothe the panicking Antiochians] appeared everywhere, as if they had been so many angels arriving from heaven...The statues which have been thrown down are again set up, and have resumed their proper appearance, and the mischief was speedily rectified, but if you put to death the image of God, how will you again be able to revoke the deed?
> **Statues 17.3: PG49-50.173AB**

[35] C Matthew 59.6: PG57-58.582C.

The relation between city and emperor ranks beneath the relationship between the population or even the individual inhabitant and heaven, where a similar crime would have been irredeemable. On the other hand, the hierarchical step between city and ruler is not sacrificed for that. The *basileus* must be more ornate than the city, which is why he wears purple and crown, while the city simply displays linen sheets, presumably out of the windows.[36] Suggestions for this arrangement must be found in imperial ceremonial and its connection with city topography.[37] Many little scenes involving the *basileus* have their origin in Chrysostom's city experience - for example, the beggar is also a city phenomenon. To illustrate that God takes no account of earthly honours, Chrysostom portrays both *basileus* and beggar partaking of the divine mysteries 'with the same trust and the same respect', each having his own worries to contend with.[38]

But what is the conclusion one can draw from this evidence? It is as if the city, in a way, is the common denominator of the royal and heavenly superstructure. The superior institutions have really little function without the broad base of souls/population organized in the unit of the city. One might argue that the city appears in Chrysostom relatively infrequently, but then he mentions no other human form of organisation other than kingdom, church and city. A small unit, like a village, does not appear - one can see Chrysostom is not a country man. Any metaphor dealing with a community must use the city almost by default.

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[36] C Matthew 69.2: PG57-58.651C.

[37] S.R.F. Price, *Ritual and Power: The Roman Imperial Cult in Asia Minor* (Cambridge, 1984) devotes p.107-113 to this question.

[38] In sanctum paschia concio 3: PG51-52.769: BVI.558.

5 Ideals of Government and the Anti-*basileus*

Having explored Chrysostom's own attitude towards metaphor, and having surveyed how widely he uses the God-*basileus* parallel, one should investigate more closely what definition he gives the *basileus* in this metaphor. Chrysostom has already explained his choice of the earthly *basileus* and his environment as a translation for God and heaven. He pointed to the psychology of human faith wanting to explain the sublime with what ranks highest in earthly terms and is to the average citizen at least as remote. But Chrysostom's choice must have been prompted by more than that. If the highest institution on earth had been something thoroughly evil in concept and execution, it would probably not have been chosen. It is no novelty that the Roman Empire appealed to the Christian Fathers as the potentially ideal framework for ruling the world according to the Word. This chapter collates Chrysostom's statements on monarchic rule, on government as an institution. Then one can isolate how he would define the ideal ruler. This is qualified by the limits even the most ideal ruler has because of his earthliness, and this will merge into a sketch of the 'anti-*basileus*', the embodiment of everything a *basileus* should not be.

Chrysostom makes well-defined statements about government and what it should be like. 'Anarchy' and 'polyarchy' are described as God-less states, and he lists the afflictions suffered by God-deserted societies in the Old Testament.[1] Tyranny is compared to the work of a demon:

> Οὐ γὰρ ἄνθρωπος, ἀλλά τις πονηρὸς δαίμων καθάπερ τύραννος ἄγριος τὴν οἰκουμένην ἅπασαν καταλαβὼν, μετὰ πάσης αὐτοῦ τῆς φάλαγγος εἰς τὰς τῶν ἀνθρώπων εἰσεκώμασε ψυχάς.
> **Adversus oppugnatores vitae monasticae I.6: PG47-48.328: BI.104**[2]

A tyrant is not a *basileus*, and the reign of Julian is a tyranny. As a contrast the true *basileus* is described, God is '*ὁ δὲ βασιλεύς καὶ δημιουργὸς καὶ*

[1] Ad Stagirium a daemone vexatum II.6-8: PG47-48.458-62: BI.326ff.

[2] Translation: '...for it was not a man, but some evil demon taking over the whole world like a savage tyrant, who burst into the souls of men with his entire armament.'

σωτῆρ'.[3] Is God, therefore, completely dissociated from the existence of tyrannies, and less than ideal forms of government? There is a passage in Chrysostom's commentary on Job qualifying this. Job describes the divine disposition of the world. God makes captive the counsellors of the world, establishes the *basileis* on the thrones and sends preachers into captivity. Chrysostom sees all this as 'proof of wisdom'.[4] But this is a freak statement, possibly provoked by the content of the biblical subject matter, and the authenticity of this text is disputed. Far more frequent are statements like the following:

> As we see him encourage the sinner by his clemency, and frighten the just by his severity, we see him act in the same manner in the order of temporal things. To men surrounded by the splendour of dignity, to *basileis*, to princes, to all those who live in opulence, he speaks a language full of terror, giving fear like a rein to power. 'And now, *basileis*, listen, learn, arbiters of the world. Serve the Lord with faith and rejoice in him with trembling' (Psalm 2.10-11). For 'he is the *basileus* of *basileis*, Lord of Lords', (I Timothy 6.15). There where power rules, he puts the fear of his own kingship (*βασιλείας*). Where there is nothing but weakness and obscurity, he lets shine the light of his charity.
> **De paenitentia 7.3: PG49-50.327: BIII.551**

In another passage using the tiers of rule Chrysostom creates a parallel involving the husband as monarch, the wife as general and the children as servants as an interlude to defining natural sovereignty. Man was set over woman from the beginning. Only after our race became 'wrecked in disorder', the sovereignty of rulers was introduced.[5] Most frequently, the support of monarchy as an institution is linked with the need of divine inspiration:

> This is the prime cause of all these evils, that the authority of rulers (*τῶν ἀρχόντων*) is neglected, that there is no reverence, no fear. He says: 'Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves' (Hebrews 13.17). But now all is turned upside down and confounded. And this I say not for the sake of the leaders (*τῶν ἡγουμένων*) - for what benefit will they have of the honour they receive from us, except so far as we are rendered obedient - but I say it for your advantage. For with respect to the future, they will not benefit from the honour done them, but receive the greater condemnation, neither will they be injured as to the future by ill treatment, but will have the more excuse. But all this I desire to be done for your own sakes. For when leaders (*οἱ ἡγούμενοι*) are honoured by their subjects (*ἀρχομένων*), this too is reckoned against them, as in the case of Eli it is said: 'Did I not choose

[3] De s. Babyla contra Julianum et gentiles 2: PG49-50.535: BIV.219.

[4] C Job 12.9: SC346.341.

[5] C I Corinth. 34.3-4: PG61.291: LF9.477.

him out of his father's house?' (I Samuel 2.27). But when they are insulted, as in the instance of Samuel, God said: 'They have not rejected you, but they have rejected me' (I Samuel 8.7). Therefore insult is their gain, honour their burden. What I say, therefore, is for your sakes, not for theirs. He that honours the priest, will honour God also, and he who has learned to despise the priest, will in process of time insult God.
C II Timothy 2.2: PG62.609C-D

There are two conflicting strains in this statement. Prompted by his biblical source, Chrysostom portrays rulers like martyrs, profiting from abuse. At the same time, the Christian is exhorted to honour rulers, but not for their sake - simply as a principle of Christian conduct, and as a parallel for the honour to be shown to priests. This principle of loyalty is not unique. Speaking about the first epistle to Timothy Chrysostom exhorts both priests and private individuals to pray for *basileis* and governors (*ὑπὲρ ἀρχόντων*) to help in their task of ending wars and tumults.[6] But one must not overlook one element in both these passages, and that is the severe limitation of the power and, to a degree, self-determination of the *basileus*. In the first passage, the *basileus* finds himself bound in a divine concept of endurance and reward, and little depends actually on his merit, much more on his sufferings - nothing could be more remote from Eusebius. Also, in this passage he is not even called '*basileus*', but is given far more abstract terms.

It is not prayer alone that helps, the *basileus* must earn divine protection by showing his good intentions, by trying hard. He needs the help of God so that his subjects do not rise in revolt, and he himself must do all he can towards this end by good government - to achieve this is comparable to a victory over enemies from outside, which likewise cannot be achieved without divine support.[7] Divine inspiration is translated for the benefit of the rulers by the Church, it acts as both agent and guardian. The Church will give a peace that embraces the entire universe, superseding the divisions of polyarchies and monarchies, and all nations will belong to one great empire submitted to the faith.[8] Does Chrysostom envisage *the* empire here? However that may be, the message for the *basileus* is put much more bluntly elsewhere: if you deprive yourself of divine counsel, no royalty, nothing of your power will serve you,[9] while 'those who rule well shall be doubly

[6] C I Timothy 7.1: PG62.533D+534D.
[7] C Psalms 143.1: PG55.458: BIX.659.
[8] Contra Judaeos et gentiles quod Christus sit deus 6: PG47-48.821-822: BII.322.
[9] De viduis 9: PG51-52.330:BV.512.

honoured'.[10] The duty to appeal to God even applies to the royalty of every man. In the context of 'man made in the image of God' Chrysostom states that true royalty is 'to attract the propitious regard and clemency of God by the quality of our life'.[11] All these quotes hint already at the idea that if a ruler tries to act in accordance with divine laws, he will be helped, and his reign will be hallowed by success. By contrast, an evil reign is only the ruler's responsibility:

> ...The establishment of power is the work of God, but the lowering of power towards perversity and the dreadful usage which is made of it, that is the work of man.
> 5....So, if you execute a magistracy, give thanks to the divine goodness which has given you occasion to deploy such solicitude; if you are governed, again give thanks that there is one to watch over you, and does not let evil ones ensnare you.
> **C Psalms 148. 4-5: PG55.491-492: BX.46**

The passage has complex implications, not least because it extends the responsibilities of rule also to the minor delegates of earthly power. The perversion of power is the work of man, but God watches over the carrier of power and does not let evil persons take advantage of him. Chrysostom is aware of possible confusion in this context, leading to the question of what lawful kingship is:

> The old laws were not only unhelpful, but they even hampered and battled against [the apostles], as did the evilness and ignorance of the persecutors. For, they [the persecutors] said, they [the apostles] have Christ as *basileus*. For they [the persecutors] did not think of his kingdom above...but attacked them as wanting to inflict a tyranny on the world.
> **De laudibus sancti Pauli apostoli 4.16:SC300.216-218**

Chrysostom explains how the thought process of these persecutors worked: Christ's heavenly kingship is mistaken for an illegal earthly kingship, challenging the empire. The New Testament makes clear that existing earthly rule is not to be challenged: 'for the sake of the Lord, accept the authority of the emperor' (I Peter 2.13), 'there should be prayers offered especially for kings and others in authority' (I Timothy 2.2). The concept of kingship on a different level from earthly kingship, not posing a challenge, but nevertheless superior, will become more prominent in a separate chapter on the relationship between priesthood and kingship, a facet that should be examined as Chrysostom finds himself eventually in the position of

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[10] C I Thess. 10.1: PG62.456: LF14.440-441.

[11] C Genesis 23.5: PG53-54.203-204: BVII.319.

displeasing an imperial court more or less by supporting his idea of priesthood.[12]

This problem has a parallel in Chrysostom's explanation of good and evil in man - the evil element is the image of the earthly, the good component is the image of the heavenly. Interestingly, he then draws the conclusion that 'image' therefore refers to conduct and behaviour and not to the nature of a person.[13] This, in turn, clashes with Chrysostom's theory that man is royal by nature - man is created with such an elevated dignity that God gives 'to this monarch' Paradise as a palace.[14] There are more statements on this question of human royalty:

> He honoured our race with this kingdom. For he said, 'Let us make man after our image, and after our likeness.' (Genesis 1.26). What is the sense of this 'after our image, and after our likeness'? The image of government is that which is meant, and as there is no one in heaven superior to God, so let there be no one upon earth superior to man...He conferred this rule upon us as a thing of nature. For of rules there are some natural, and others which are elective, natural as that of the lion over the quadrupeds, or as that of the eagle over the birds. Elective, as that of a *basileus* over us, for he does not reign over his fellow-servants by any natural authority. Therefore it is that he often loses his rule. For such are things which do not inhere naturally, they readily admit of change and transposition. But not so with the lion...
> **Statues 7.3: PG49-50.93C**

Man's natural rule is emphasized - the parallel to the supreme heavenly ruler God is not the earthly ruler, but simply man, the royal animal. This emphasis, as in the bee-metaphor of Basil of Caesarea mentioned in Part I, shows a flaw in the authority of the *basileus*, his rule is assumed and not natural.[15] There can be a different slant on this:

> 'For there is no authority but from God', (Romans 13.1) - what do you say to that? All those who rule are invested by God? That is not what I mean, the apostle will say, I do not speak of individual rulers, but of the thing itself. I mean that there are rulers, that there are those who rule and those who are ruled, that not everything goes on top of each other, that the people are not driven to and fro like waves - that, I say, is a work of the wisdom of God. Therefore he does not say: there is no ruling person apart from God. Much rather, he speaks of the institution.
> **C Romans 24.1: PG60.615B**

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[12] In a different passage to be referred to on p.113 Chrysostom again explains that the apostles laid themselves open to attack under Roman law because they had Christ for *basileus*.

[13] C I Corinth. 42.1 [I Corinth. 15.47]: PG61.361-363: LF9.597.

[14] Ad Stagirium a daemone vexatum I.2: PG47-48.428: BI.274.

[15] See p.26.

Rule is again defined as natural here. No direct reference to the earthly ruler is made, but the implications, this time, are positive - it is inferred that rulers are necessary. It is the same as when the Cappadocians speak of monarchy as opposed to anarchy, as Chrysostom does above.

In the context of baptism as a spiritual process that makes man royal this almost negative necessity is given elaborate and positive connotations, simply because here it is the kingdom of heaven man is invested with. Chrysostom describes, as if an earthly court was involved, how those destined for royal power on earth are surrounded with honours even before being enthroned and how everybody tries to win their favour to ensure their protection once they have 'received that robe purpled by divine blood'.[16] This spiritual kingship is also defined by the means of direct comparison with institutional kingship - what makes a *basileus*, and who is a *basileus*?

> We are to enjoy a kingdom, and are made priests by offering our bodies for a sacrifice...And in another way too we become *basileis*: if we have the mind to get dominion over our unruly thoughts, for that such a one is a *basileus*, and more than he who wears the diadem, I will now make plain to you. He has many armies, but we again have thoughts, exceeding them in number, for it is impossible to number the infinite multitude of all the thoughts that are within us. Nor is their multitude all one has to consider, but besides, that in this multitude of thoughts, there are many generals, and colonels, and captains, and archers, and slingers. What else makes a *basileus*? His apparel? But this one too is arrayed in a better and braver robe, which neither does moth devour, nor age impair. A crown too he has of curious workmanship, that of glory, that of the tender mercies of God...
> But let us institute afresh and from the beginning a stricter inquiry into the condition of these *basileis*. That *basileus* has dominion over his guards, and issues orders to all, and all obey him and serve him, but here I show you greater authority... seek for those who in either kind have ordered well their kingdom.... Abraham...was not a *basileus*, but all trembled in terror of him, more than at a *basileus* his guards.... Abraham vanquished tyranny by obeying the order to slay his son, more than *basileis*, *augusti*, caesars...
> **C II Corinth. 3.5 (II Corinth.1.21-22): PG61.411-413: LF27.43-45**

Apart from a host of other considerations, the passage introduces the element of the subjects of the *basileus*, and one finds that Chrysostom sees kingship also as shaped by the needs, behaviour and response of the subjects. It is the interaction that in the end determines a reasonably happy realm, although it may not be ideal. On the subject of Nimrod putting himself into power,

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[16] Ad illuminandos catechesis I.1: PG49-50.223: BIII.377.

Chrysostom says that the institution of the earthly *basileus* is impossible without subjects, but that true liberty only exists outside material subjection.[17] Chrysostom describes this not quite ideal state also more tangibly. He presents the case of a scoundrel, 'author of a thousand evil deeds, engineering to our loss - but he is the *basileus*, he rules, he has first authority over us.' But, he says, even if such representatives of royal authority are known to us as being evil, we still have to respect them for what they represent - just as when divine authority is involved.[18] This pragmatic approach is also taken when describing the difficulties of representing government, being a local carrier of central or remote power. The leadership acumen of Bishop Ignatius of Antioch is an example:

> If it is difficult to rule well just 100 men, or even 50, when it is a question of governing such a big city, a people that number no less than 200 000 souls, what virtue, what wisdom will be required! In the army, the palace guards and the biggest legions are put in the hands of the wisest generals. The same with the big cities full of men, the most distinguished governors are entrusted with them...God has special attention for our world [Antioch]. The apostle to whom he has submitted the entire world, Peter, who in his hands had received the keys to the kingdom of the heavens, with unlimited power, stayed here for a long time, by effect of divine will, and our city in his eyes seemed to counterbalance the rest of the world.
> **In s. Ignatium martyrem 4: PG49-50.591: BIV.312**

The need for specialists in government, preserving practical sense in the midst of the demands of royal power is expressed in a difficult simile. Even if a *basileus* orders his subjects on pain of death to fly towards heaven, nature will still not allow them to do it. Nature will also be their barrier if he orders chastity, again on pain of death. It is to coordinate the orders, the punishments, and the means of achievement that judges and legislators are required - by which Chrysostom of course means priests and preachers.[19] Punishment is represented as a necessary ingredient of both heavenly and earthly power. Even on earth a man transgressing the laws of the rulers cannot escape - how much more dreadful the fate of those disobeying the Master above the heavens.[20] Even instances of permissible royal rage are cited in connection with Moses and David.[21] Still, even the solutions in these more practical areas of rule should mirror divine wisdom:

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[17] C Genesis 29.8: PG53-54.272: BVII.431.

[18] De Davide et Saule I.6: PG53-54.685: BVIII.485.

[19] C I Corinth. 2.3: PG61.21-22: BXVI.336.

[20] De instituenda secundum deum vita 1: PG51-52.41:BV.48 – might date from Constantinople.

[21] C Psalms 4.8: PG55.50-51: BVIII.568.

> Because the present life is fragile and perishable and as we are still far from perfection, God made for our benefit that which the legislators of the world execute, that they do not hand over the paternal heritage to those who have not reached majority.
> **C Psalms 6.1: PG55.61: BVIII.586**

That means the legislators do not necessarily make the laws themselves, they only execute. It is probably again Chrysostom's strong pastoral concern that leads him to consider the individual subject's projections upon a *basileus*:

> The *basileis* [magi] came and they are penetrated with admiration in the presence of this celestial monarch/*basileus* descended to earth without being surrounded by angels and archangels and thrones and dominations and powers; in the presence of this *basileus* who follows a singular road only known to him, born of a virgin, and without in any way abdicating from the power he exercises over the angels, he in becoming man does not lose any of the privileges of his divinity. The *basileis* have come, therefore, to adore the celestial *basileus* of glory, the soldiers, to adore the Lord of the hosts of the powers, the women to adore him born of a woman and who transformed the pain of womanhood into happiness...
> **In natalem Christi diem 1: PG56.387: BXI.115**

Everybody and every group and class finds a counterpart in Christ, beginning with the magi beholding 'their' *basileus*. All kinds of groups and classes of an average population are considered, everybody seems to find his ideal in Christ - embodying the sphere of their respective lives, trades, sex, social standing. It seems to me noteworthy, though, that this lengthy sequence is opened with Christ as *basileus*, and that this quality in him is described in greater detail than the other characteristics, thus opening and permeating the entire sequence. Is this ability to induce a variety of responses from different groups of subjects a characteristic of the ideal *basileus*?

That leads on to the question of just what it is that in Chrysostom's eyes keeps the earthly *basileus* from becoming the lofty counterpart of God in Eusebian terms. Of all *basileis*, Chrysostom points out that only Christ deserves the title of *basileus* of righteousness and peace.[22] Even the ideal earthly *basileus* will find that limits are imposed by his very humanity. This point is reinforced by an unusual domestic scene, a description of how even a royal father must let a wayward prince (*βασιλέως υἱός*) associating with thieves and drunkards go for a while.[23] It is in such general metaphorical

[22] C Hebrews 12.1: PG63.96-97: LF.150-151.
[23] C Romans 4.3: PG60.415A.

usage of *basileus* that one sees the adaptable quality this metaphor apparently has for Chrysostom - on a spiritual level the introduction of a drunkard son of a royal father would have been theologically unthinkable.

Most of the examples introduced so far put the earthly *basileus* on an inferior level, and indeed the recurrent theme is that true spiritual fervour is always superior to anything connected with the *basileus*, and this is expressed in numerous short and fleeting comparisons. The grave of a virtuous man is more splendid than a palace.[24] This idea reappears frequently, and in those instances the graves are mostly martyria. Partly this can be explained by Chrysostom's personal inclination towards martyrdom. He still lives in a time when it was not only glorified, but part of recent reality, and when many spiritual athletes longed for a chance to undergo martyrdom. It is not only graves and martyria that supersede palaces, it is also the church building itself:

> You are at the top of the city for your zeal and vigilance, for wanting to put into practice the instructions you are given. For me, that is a more august spectacle than the court of a *basileus*. The goods distributed at court, whatever their value may be, evaporate with the present life, they are inseparable from chaos and much worry. Here [in church] there is nothing like that, security is perfect, no trouble poisons the honours, the dignities have no end, and far from being destroyed by death, they instead become more and more solid. Do not speak to me about him who sits on his throne, marshalling conceits, and having many guards...judge him much rather by the disposition of his soul...
> **De futurae vitae deliciis 1: PG51-52.347: BV.540**

This metaphor is spun out and repeated. There is also an element of a potentially hostile environment surrounding the *basileus* and hampering him. As he is surrounded by greater temptations, it is harder for him to live in virtue, therefore he cannot rise as high as an ordinary believer. This idea is based on and is a variation of New Testament concepts of the rich and successful man. A good example is found in Matthew 19.24, Mark 10.25 and Luke 18.25 in the image of the camel going through the needle's eye and the rich man going to heaven. Chrysostom describes vividly how a faithful disciple not only receives the kingdom of heaven, but also has greater credit with God while still living on earth, so that he has more real kingship than all *basileis*. And a *basileus* can become the victim of intrigues and two-faced friends, while such a man cannot be harmed by anybody, not even by the

[24] De s. Pelagia virgine et martyre I.3: PG49-50.582: BIV.297.

basileus or the devil.[25] The ephemeral nature of power and fame is another major limitation of the *basileus*:

> The power of [ordinary] *basileis* only lasts for their lifetime,...while the power of the apostles was never greater than after their death. Let us add that the laws of the *basileis* of the earth only have force within their kingdom, while the laws promulgated by simple sinners have extended their rule to the extremities of the earth. A Roman emperor cannot give laws to the Persians, nor the Persians to the Romans, and the apostles, Jews by origin, have imposed their laws on Persians, Romans, Thracians, Scyths, Indians, Arabs, the whole world.
> **C Psalms 44.13: PG55.202-203: BIX.217**

Making this same point, Chrysostom resorts to the use of very similar images in several different passages - the following is representative:

> Nothing assures immortality to your name as virtue does...How many *basileis* have founded cities, constructed harbours to which they have given their names - now they are dead, and what service does all that do them? Their memory is enveloped in complete forgetting, while a simple sinner, St. Peter...
> **C Psalms 48.6: PG55.231-232: BIX.268**

The same *topos* - a prestigious building programme - appears again in the same text.[26] Another string of statements works in a similar fashion, substituting triumphal statues for building projects. In spite of all the portraits and 'thousands of souvenirs' nobody remembers bygone *basileis*,[27] any more than the generals, governors, athletes and charioteers those very *basileis* also commemorated by icons and columns.[28] An interesting variation on this theme is Chrysostom's remark that Mary is celebrated more than the best *basileus* and *basilissa*, who are soon forgotten.[29] It is one of the rare appearances of the *basilissa* during the Antioch period. Chrysostom never seems to have an idea of the partner of the basileus, a habit of thought that ill prepared him for the encounter with Eudoxia once in Constantinople.[30]

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[25] De resurrectione mortuorum 3: PG49-50.423: BIV.52-53.

[26] C Psalms 48.8: PG55.235.

[27] De Anna IV.3: PG53-54.603-604: BVIII.449.

[28] C Psalms 3.1: PG55.35: BVIII.540.

[29] Adversus Judaeos V.2: PG47-48.885: BII.434.

[30] It is difficult to establish whether there was ever a *basilissa* resident in Antioch during Chrysostom's lifetime. Gallus had his wife with him in the early 350s - A.H.M. Jones, *Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire vol. I* (Cambridge, 1971) p.222, s.v. Constantina 2. About the wife of Valens we know too little to be sure. Such a scarcity of real empresses in the palace of Antioch could explain the absence of the *basilissa* from Chrysostom's thought.

Still, the natural frailty of human life and human constructions is not such a strong moral verdict, it is simply a limitation. It is different when Chrysostom looks at imperial insignia and environment. Imperial ceremonial is to be viewed with suspicion, it is not only not relevant to happiness, indeed it is more likely to jeopardize it. Chrysostom illustrates the wisdom of God's advice to Abraham for choosing a daughter-in-law by emphasizing that God did *not* point towards 'a woman in a magnificent chariot pulled by mules, in the middle of a group of eunuchs and a multitude of servants'.[31] Chrysostom does not mention any *basileus* here, but it is significant that in describing doubtful opulence, he lapses into the language of ceremonial. There are also very real limits to the powers of the *basileus* in a constitutional sense:

> To forgive sins, is only possible for God. Rulers and *basileis*, whether it is adulterers whom they forgive, or murderers, , release them indeed from their present punishment, but their sin they do not purge out. Though they should advance to offices them that have been forgiven, though they should invest them with the purple itself, though they should set the diadem upon their heads, yet so they would only make them *basileis*, but could not free them from their sins. It is God alone who does this.
> **C I Corinth. 40.2: PG61.348-349: LF9.572**

It must be noted, though, that the descriptions of divine kingship expressed in this and connected homilies, especially in C I Corinth. 39, are not the subject of this study.

After the inferiority of royal accoutrements, it is also the *basileus* himself who is portrayed as almost incapable of thinking and acting independently of his materialistic environment. *Basileis* and rich men achieve nothing but by means of their wealth, while the believer embracing poverty accomplishes the most amazing feats.[32] Again, the negative attitude towards wealth and power as obstacles to faith is based on biblical values, but as shall be seen in the following quotes and references, Chrysostom develops variations of his own.[33] In one passage, the contrast is strong between a few humble individuals who have the faith, and the foremost thinkers and most powerful personalities who have not:

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[31] In illud: *Propter fornicationes uxorem* III.6: PG51-52.234: BV.355.

[32] In illud: *Salutate Priscillam et Aquilam* II.4: PG51-52.203: BV.303.

[33] For a New Testament background, one should again consider the parable of the rich man and the camel in Matthew 19.24, Mark 10.25 and Luke 18.25, and the story of Lazarus the beggar and the rich man and their respective fates after death in Luke 16.19-22. See p. 99.

> All that lives in the world is under an illusion [in Paul's day]. The sophists and rhetors and philosophers and authors, the men of our times and bygone ages, a Plato, a Pythagoras, and generals and administrators and *basileis*, the founders and the most distinguished of cities, and barbarians and Greeks - only a dozen of sinners, tentmakers and tax collectors know the truth.
> **C I Corinth. 7.7: PG61.63: BXVI.408**

Chrysostom in the first instance refers to the times of Paul, then expands his statement into a general verdict, identifying the exponents of classical culture and the carriers of imperial power as those 'under an illusion'. Elsewhere, 'barbarians', meaning pagans, can be an effective brake on this positive development of a *basileus*. Even a rich nobleman is miserable when he is the slave of vices, just like a *basileus* when he is at the mercy of barbarians.[34] And again there is the combination of wealth as such and the *basileus*. Chrysostom is highly aware of the fact that imperial ritual and ceremonial inevitably involves the display of riches, and there is a passage contrasting this wealth with the poverty of onlookers in a positive comparison between an imperial procession and heaven:

> Even if there was no hell, what chastisement would it be to be deprived of this shining glory and to be shamefully rejected! Down here, many people see the *basileus* in procession, and think of their own poverty, and do not take much pleasure in seeing the spectacle, considering that they are not one of those close to him...so why do you think it is light punishment not to be part of the celestial choirs...
> **De perfecta caritate 4: PG56.284: BX.537**

A number of statements involve these images. One of the most basic tenets is that, 'all have to render account, princes, rich, poor, before God'.[35] And not only do riches not signify positively, they are not even real. The affairs of this life are in reality just a dream. Poor people imagine they have great riches in their dreams that are gone when they wake up - and the riches of this world are gone when we arrive in the next.[36] Actors play the roles of *basileis* and generals, as in life, 'where richness and poverty are nothing but the vain props of the theatre'. You do not mistake the actor for a rich man or for a *basileus*, and you do not mistake the *basileus* for a happy man.[37] This image must be seen in the context of Chrysostom's ceaseless endeavour both to reconcile his flock with poverty - which leads to the conclusion that most of them must have been already poor - and to make those who were better off

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[34] C I Corinth. 9.3: PG61.80: BXVI.436.

[35] De decem millium talentorum debitore 2: PG51-52.22: BV.17-18.

[36] C Psalms 43.3: PG55.170-171: BIX.159.

[37] De Lazaro II.3: PG47-48.986: BII.578.

give up their lifestyle in favour of true spiritual freedom. Here 'royal treasures' appear along with despicable material goods. An explicit juxtaposition of the *basileus* with all his insignia with 'the poor' is also made, and it has appeared before: the *basileus* with his diadem and the poor man ask for alms at the same table at the end of all days.[38]

Self-inflicted poverty and suffering in general are also offset favourably against royal accoutrements. Flee evil, seek virtue, otherwise happiness cannot be achieved even on a royal throne.[39] Even the *basileus* is poor as long as he stands in need of others, Chrysostom's definition of poverty states.[40] And the eremitical life is rewarded not by public dinners and brazen statues, but eternal life and permission to stand before the royal throne, rather than to have to perform obeisance.[41] True virtue surpasses everything, while a wrongdoer is to be pitied even if he is a *basileus* .[42] That the *basileus* can be even more of an attraction to wrongdoers than to virtuous men is implied by Chrysostom's remark that old drunkards can still be rich and have numerous servants; that they are admired, and close to the *basileus*.[43] If Chrysostom could find a poor *basileus*, maybe he would be considered truly ideal? As it is, there is only one true *basileus*, not a dazzling *basileus* of the earth, but the Master of the Universe.[44]

But one must not forget that element in Chrysostom which was discussed at the beginning of the chapter and which reminds the subjects of these less-than-perfect *basileis* still to uphold their part of the deal. *Basileis* bring in laws which we obey in all their imperfection - so we should respect the law of God much more.[45] The inadequacy of imperial laws is here accepted as almost to be expected, and as if disillusioned with the suitability of earthly *basileis*, the metaphor is turned round on one occasion. God is not explained

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38 Adversos ebriosos et de resurrectione 3: PG49-50.437: BIV.75.

39 C Romans 2.4: PG60.400D.

40 C I Timothy 11.2: PG62.556A.

41 C Matthew 1.5: PG57-58.414B-C. The idea of standing before the throne of a heavenly *basileus* can be traced to various verses of Revelations: 7.9-10, 7.15, and 20.12 for example, while the public dinners and brazen statues, which are seen negatively here, are usually connected with a career in the earthly imperial service.

42 De fato et providentia I: PG49-50.752: BIV.553. The authenticity of this text has been disputed. I always thought it deviated in no way from undisputed texts, and then found a study by Th. P. Halton, "Saint John Chrysostom, 'De fato et providentia': A study of its Authenticity", *Traditio* 20 (1963) 1-24, analysing content (2-18) and style patterns (18 ff.), concluding from both that the text was authentic.

43 De resurrectione mortuorum 1: PG49-50.419: BIV.45.

44 De s. Pelagia virgine et martyre I.4: PG49-50.584: BIV.299.

45 Statues 16.5: PG49-50.164.

by using an earthly title - rather, earthly *basileis* are regrettable imitations and have a fake quality about them:

> The *basileis* of the earth owe the honour that surrounds them to those who have submitted to their rule; He [Christ], on the contrary, heaps honours on his subjects. Also, the others are only *basileis* by name, while He is a *basileus* in reality. A truly great *basileus* is He who has made a heaven of all earth, who has inspired the barbarians with divine wisdom and has brought them to imitate the behaviour of the angels.
> **C Psalms 46.3: PG55.211-212: BIX.233**

So far, these inadequate earthly *basileis* were grudgingly accepted despite their shortcomings and the qualifications Chrysostom himself makes of their power and ability. But the figure of the earthly *basileus* can sink lower than that, and Chrysostom portrays a *basileus* who is beyond acceptance. The 'anti-*basileus*' is an intensified and wilful version of this limited *basileus*. He is the *basileus* who consciously turns away from divine inspiration, from obedience to divine dispensation. When commenting on Psalms Chrysostom links both elements. He first states that *basileis* and rulers of the world want to keep it in impiety - which turns them into active anti-*basileis*, they act evilly. But he goes on to say that their rule is ephemeral, while the apostles triumph forever - with that he points, again, to the natural limitations of earthly *basileis*. In essence, the anti-*basileus* is the *basileus* who does not accept the guidance of the spiritual experts, who revels in his lush environment, who gives rein to temper, who tries to rule not heeding the divine dispensation incorporating his particular realm.[46]

Chrysostom's portrayal of the anti-*basileus* is, not surprisingly, fuelled by the experience in his lifetime of Julian the Apostate, who incorporates everything a *basileus* should not be. Chrysostom not only attacks him for his impiety and his anti-Christian activity, but also accuses him of squandering military resources, and blames him for hard conditions for horses and men during the Persian wars, 'so that soldiers were reduced to plundering around Antioch even'.[47] Chrysostom speaks here from local experience, although it is doubtful whether he would have attacked a pious *basileus* as harshly for similar failures. Julian is the main enemy in the 'De s. Babyla contra Julianum et gentiles', in which Chrysostom makes not the saint's original martyrdom, but the disturbance of his body by Julian the main theme.

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[46] C Psalms 140.4: PG55.270-271: BIX.335.

[47] De s. Babyla contra Julianum et gentiles 23: PG49-50.569-570: BIV.276-277. Chrysostom is not alone in this specific criticism of Julian. Theodoret III.20: PG82.1117-1120, Sozomen VI.1: PG67.1289, Socrates III.17: PG67.424 and III.21: PG67.432.

Against this background Julian's activities in Antioch, wanting to reinstate the cult of Apollo at Daphne, are also described:

> ...he surrounds himself with low men, women depraved with the worst of vices, and it is with such a court that he presents himself in the entire town, even in the most remote quarters. The household of the *basileus* and all the guards stay well behind all this, while hustlers and girls come forward and all this chorus of whores surrounds the *basileus* and walks around the agora with him...we know that these things seem incredible to posterity...
> **De s. Babyla contra Julianum et gentiles 14: PG49-50.555: BIV.25**

So there is not only the anti-*basileus* as a person, also the ceremonial with which he chooses to surround himself is described as perverted, as a mockery.[48] With these experiences, how is it possible that the earthly *basileus* is still used as the metaphorical counterpart of God? Chrysostom pays tribute to many martyrs under Julian, as in his homily on the martyred soldiers Juventinus and Maximinus. At their death they leave the legions of the earth and join the angelic choirs around the *basileus* of the heavens.[49] The soldiers do not change their profession at their death, they simply switch to a different host. It seems that during Julian's reign, the idea of the *basileus* is just stored in heaven, Julian does not count as one. Also it is made clear that if you die serving the earthly *basileus*, there will be nothing to show for that in the afterlife. If you die serving the heavenly *basileus*, every happiness is prepared for you.

This pageant of different values connected with different definitions of earthly rule and the personal carriers of that rule makes it clear that for Chrysostom '*basileus*' is not a fixed concept. He is comprehensive in his interpretation of the potential of earthly rule, and takes for granted that the basic necessity of this rule is accepted. This puts even the anti-*basileus* into the normal order of things. Rule is natural, is Chrysostom's attitude, and how it is executed fluctuates with humanity's potential for good or evil. Having established what Chrysostom's parameters are when thinking about the phenomenon of earthly rule and earthly rulers as an institution, or even just as an idea, the

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[48] It should be noted that Julian's pagan contemporaries also found fault with his lack of respect for established imperial ceremonial. Ammianus reports a variety of criticisms of Julian, which included Julian being surrounded by women during solemn ceremonies - Ammianus 22.14.3. Gleason, *Festive Satire*, p.107-108 sees the tension between Antioch and Julian as partly based on Julian's refusal or inability to fit into the accepted imperial mould.

[49] In Juventinum et Maximinum martyres 2: PG49-50.575: BIV.286ff.

next chapter must deal with his attitude towards the real rulers of his own or former times.

6 The Real *Basileus*

Accepting the proposition that for the Christian the Old Testament is divinely inspired history, the attitude of Chrysostom towards the protagonists of this history must be interesting. Not because in itself it is new or different, but because it contributes yet another facet of his evaluation and use of the image of 'the *basileus*'. It soon becomes apparent that he follows biblical precedent in seeing two main elements in Old Testament *basileis*. On the one hand, there is the exemplary biblical ruler who diligently works at fulfilling God's will, although even doing his best he must remain imperfect. On the other hand, there is the biblical ruler who even while doing this in principle, exceeds his authority and either tries to usurp the functions of the representative of God, the priest, or challenges God's will itself.

These two categories refer mainly to the rulers of Israel, but Chrysostom in the main follows Scripture also in the evaluation of other *basileis*. It will be seen that rulers from outside are on the whole judged by the same principles, some, like the Pharaoh, sternly, others more leniently. Amongst those, Nebuchadnezzar is a controversial figure. He is the evil power in the story of the three youths in the fire. He seems a very early example of the unavoidable evil of the anti-*basileus*. But Chrysostom clings to the ideal that the dispensation of the biblical world was principally good. He draws attention to the fact that Egypt and Persia were under the dominion of Abraham, the Ismaelites and others by his children, while Mesopotamia was under Jacob. 'So if you want, the entire universe had saints as rulers.' He then tries to move this pattern from the Orient also to the Occident, aiming for a completely biblical interpretation of world history.[1] But Nebuchadnezzar disturbs this biblical harmony by not being a saintly ruler. Explaining the dream of Daniel, Chrysostom emphasizes that the empires earlier than Rome (which is the fourth empire, 'of iron', in Chrysostom's interpretation) do not survive. Then, in explaining the dream to Nebuchadnezzar, his kingship is defined. First Nebuchadnezzar is flattered - he is *basileus* of everything. Then a qualification is introduced. Nebuchadnezzar has received more than other princes from God, because God 'has made him see the empire in the image of

[1] C Psalms 4.6: PG55.49: BVIII.564.

gold'. But he only receives that gift because of the far, far greater power of God, the creator, master and sovereign of heaven.[2]

There are some instances where the exemplary biblical ruler comes close to being 'ideal' in the sense of the definitions reconnoitred in the previous chapter. The most positive example of a *basileus* is perceived in David, who only aims at fulfilling God's will, this being the main qualification for being judged a good ruler.[3] David is cited as a good example in general.[4] Even though he has unavoidable lapses, David has the right attitude towards them, he shows compunction despite his royal splendour.[5] Another positive characteristic is the importance of prayer to David and other biblical *basileis* .[6] And consolation in prayer is needed, for Chrysostom reminds us that despite good will and divine sanction the task of the biblical *basileis* was not easy. The responsibilities of biblical rulers are expressed by the term 'sadness' in one text, and Chrysostom describes the daily machinations and frustrations, how David is plunged from one despair into the next.[7] Compunction, prayer, sadness all purify the *basileus*, and lift him above the materialism of his rank. If one aspires to a really beautiful bed, not of a military chief, but of an eminent *basileus*, whose name is known the world over, one should look at the bed of David - it is adorned by prayer and tears, not gold.[8] As can already be seen in this passage, Chrysostom is - despite some idealizations of David - ambiguous in his evaluation of the title '*basileus*'. Once he uses it to underline greatness: 'It is a *basileus* who is before you', someone who deals with armies, family affairs and state administration, and as such is frequently described in Scripture.[9]

The harmony of David as earthly *basileus* honouring the heavenly *basileus* is the topic when Chrysostom cites Psalm 44.11: just as the daughter should listen and look and forget her home and family to be chosen by the *basileus*, the Christian woman shall be attentive and forget earthly ties and bad habits to invite the attention of the Master of heaven and earth.[10] But David is also

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2 Ad commentarium in Danielem : PG56.207-208: BX.424-425.

3 De Davide et Saule II.4: PG53-54.693: BVIII.693.

4 Adversus eos qui ad collectam non occurrerunt 7: PG51-52.184: BV.273.

5 De compunctione - ad Stelechium 3 - 5: PG46-47.414f.: BI.252.

6 De precatione I: PG49-50.777-778: BIV.595.

7 Ad Stagirium a daemone vexatum 3: PG46-47.480-484: BI.348ff.

8 De Lazaro I.7: PG47-48.973: BII.557.

9 De Davide et Saule I.7: PG53-54.686: BVIII.487.

10 Contra eos qui subintroductas habent virgines II.9: PG47-48.531: BI.450.

involved with the earthly symbols of kingship, which in the following passage appear as instruments of power:

> [Saul:] 'I can see that you will rule one day, that in your hand will be the Kingdom of Israel. And now swear to me by the Lord that you will not destroy my race when I am no more, that you will not erase my name from the house of my father' (Kings 24.21-22). How do you know that, [Saul]? You have in your power armies and treasures, arms and cities, horses, soldiers, all that makes royal power.
> **De Davide et Saule III.8: PG53-54.707: BVIII.521**

And Chrysostom praises David's respect when Saul still was *basileus* and David tried to keep Saul's own people from turning against their ruler.[11] But he also qualifies the splendour of the rank of *basileus*:

> An example: King David, David the Prophet. I prefer to call him by the second title, because while his kingship is limited to Palestine, his prophecies extend to the extremities of the earth; because his kingship ends after a few years, while his prophecies support immortal words. Rather would the sun cease to shine than the words of David be forgotten.
> **De paenitentia II.2: PG49-50.286: BIII.482**

And he goes on to recall again how David repented of homicide and adultery - as if this made him an atypical *basileus*. Such a qualification is also apparent in the case of Abraham. He is maybe considered the most ideal of rulers, Abraham was respected like a *basileus* by his people.[12] He also has power like a *basileus*, but he is invested with his kingdom as a patriarch.[13] This distinction is probably underlined because Abraham never erred, he never misinterpreted or disobeyed God's will. In contrast, the proneness to error despite good will seems to be what defines the biblical *basileus*. David's repentance of sins has already been documented, but there is also the story of King Abimelech. His sin consists of taking Sarah, but he acted in good faith. Then Abimelech listens to God and follows his commands, but his house is sterile. This punishment is only removed through Abraham's intercession.[14]

Yet another biblical ruler, King Ahab, committed evil deeds, after which he developed remorse.[15] He is partly vindicated, partly blamed because he sinned out of listening to the advice of his queen Jezabel rather than to what

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[11] De Davide et Saule II.3: PG53-54.691: BVIII.495.

[12] In illud: *Propter fornicationes uxorem* III.8: PG51-52.237-238: BV.362.

[13] C Genesis 34.2-3: PG53-54.314-316: BVII.505ff.

[14] C Genesis 45.2-5: PG53-54.415-421: BVIII.54-61.

[15] C Psalms 7.13: PG55.101: BIX.38.

his faith should have told him.[16] The openness to divine advice, the selflessness and humility of ideal biblical *basileis* is encouraged by priests (if you will listen, you and your *basileus*, good things will come to you, but if not, then the reverse - 1 Sam. 8.11-18), and again David is the ideal here for only wanting good in itself, and no personal glory.[17] There is also the instance where the outside ruler is drawn into this cycle of error and immediate retribution. About the plagues of Egypt Chrysostom says that the chastising also included the pharaoh himself, sparing him none of the consequences of his decisions.[18]

This theme of sin, chastisement and repentance is connected with the earthly representation of divine power in a text that almost amounts to a case study. In his commentary on the story of Uzziah Chrysostom comes to grips with the archetypal forerunner of church-ruler conflicts like his own clash in Constantinople later on, or the Investiture Contest or other clashes throughout history. [19] The situation: King Uzziah is competent, faithful, wise, virtuous - a model [Old Testament] ruler. Until he decides to add to his royalty by executing a priestly task - he enters the sanctuary of the temple and despite the high priest's admonitions offers incense to God. As a punishment, he is immediately struck with leprosy. How does Chrysostom interpret this?

> But that *basileus*, going outside his competence and transgressing the limits of his kingship, undertakes to add to his prerogatives and, going into the temple beyond his own affairs, wants to offer incense. What about the priest: 'It is not permitted to you, Uzziah, to offer incense.' Witness the courage, fierceness not to be subjugated, language close to heaven, unbridled liberty, the body of a man and the mind of an angel, walking on earth and being a citizen of heaven. He saw the *basileus* and not the purple, he saw the *basileus* and not the diadem. Do not talk to me of royalty where there is transgression...You transgress your limits, you seek what you cannot do...Inflated by arrogance he goes into the temple and enters the holy of holies...
> **C Uzziah 4.5: SC277.164-66**

Royal power as such is not attacked. But it ceases to be sanctioned as soon as it tries to leave a prescribed role, and makes its own rules. It is only allowed in one form: being an instrument for the enforcement of the true faith. But in

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[16] De paenitentia II.3: PG49-50.287: BIII.485. The figure of Jezabel will gain tragic importance for Chrysostom in Constantinople.

[17] C II Corinth. 24.3 (II Corinth.11.21): PG61.567: LF27.277.

[18] C Psalms 134.5: PG55.395: BIX.552.

[19] II Kings 15.1-2, II.Chronicles 26.3. Son of Amasias, also called Azurias or Azariah. In his homilies on Uzziah – 'In illud, Vidi Dominum' (C Uzziah) – Chrysostom refers back to Isaiah 6.1ff.

the end the administration of this faith is the more important task, and this task makes priesthood superior. Chrysostom states this as an unshakeable fact, and further on in the same chapter he apologetically explains - and for once one can, because of its shortness, enjoy this statement in Chrysostom's own language, which his conviction here renders as forceful as it is simple:

> *Ταῦτα λέγω, οὐχὶ βασιλέας διαβάλλων, ἀλλὰ τοὺς τῇ ἀπονοίᾳ καὶ τῷ θυμῷ μεθύοντας, ἵνα μάθητε ὅτι ἡ ἱερωσύνη βασιλείας μείζων.*
> **C Uzziah 4.5: SC277.170**[20]

Still, both these passages are somewhat remote - partially, because the story itself is so distant in time, partly, because Chrysostom expresses an abstract theory. Later in the text he does go back to identifiable details in his explanation, and reintroduces the familiar system of levels:

> Priesthood is in fact more august and a greater power than royalty itself. Do not talk to me about purple, or diadems, or gold-embroidered cloaks. All that is shadows, things cheaper than dried flowers...if you make a comparison ... you will see how far the priest is seated above the *basileus*. Even if the royal throne seems to us to glitter, being adorned with jewels and swathed in gold, at the same time he only has the power to administer the affairs of the earth, while the throne of the priest is set up in heaven and to order the things there, one turns to him.
> **C Uzziah 5.1: SC277.182**

Soon after that Chrysostom explains that however fierce the earthly *basileus* may seem, whatever he may be doing wrong, however far he may be transgressing is of no real concern to the Christian, because he only needs to turn his eyes to God in heaven to perceive true kingship, or to the priest to behold the observance of divine laws.[21] It is interesting what a picture of priestly infallibility Chrysostom paints throughout the text, it seems that here he reaches the peak of a priest-angel parallel that appears frequently throughout his works. Finally, Uzziah does gain an even wider importance: apparently his transgression is so serious that God makes an appearance in the year the *basileus* dies - or so Chrysostom interprets Isaiah 6.1., where the prophet recounts his vision which is so important in this study and which he begins 'It happened in the year when King Uzziah died...'.[22] Chrysostom in his aggressiveness forgets that Uzziah was not an evil ruler, but made just this mistake.

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[20] Translation: 'I say this not attacking the *basileis*, but those who are drunk with folly and with passion, so that you may understand that priesthood is greater than kingship.'

[21] C Uzziah 5.1-2: SC277.185-87.

[22] C Uzziah 6.1: SC 277.203-5.

Casting a cursory glance over the evidence, it might appear that the evaluation of the historical *basileus* is a development of the negative elements of the biblical *basileus*. He generally seems to be seen as an antitype by Chrysostom, as an enemy of Christianity. But this impression is often mellowed by the pity with which Chrysostom portrays these anti-*basileis*.

It must be considered that while the attribute 'biblical' refers to the rulers described in the Old Testament, 'historical' applies to the mainly pagan rulers whose era begins with the end of the Old Law and the Roman occupation of Israel - this distinction is mine for the purposes of this thesis, it is not one emphasised by Chrysostom, for whom there was no difference between history and the events narrated in the Bible. Chrysostom briefly alludes to this in the context of Daniel's prophecy, where he looks back over three hundred years of the Roman Empire, aiming to integrate its history with Jewish prophecy.[23]

But it is difficult to reconstruct any consistent theory on Chrysostom's part out of such tenuous chronological links, his comments are extremely scarce. He once mentions that the Roman Empire cannot compete with some of the barbarian regimes. The Macedonian nation under Alexander is described positively in comparison to the Romans. The completeness of the Alexandrian conquests is likened to the victory of Christianity, nothing went wrong like in the Roman Empire.[24] Of course, there was no Christian message for Alexander to disregard and persecute.[25] The ambiguous significance of the Roman Empire is explored in a lengthy passage on II Thess. 2.6-9:

> Because he said this of the Roman Empire, he naturally glanced at it, and for the present speaks covertly and darkly. For he did not wish to bring upon himself superfluous enmities, and useless dangers. For if he

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[23] About the third captivity he remarks that it took place under Antiochus Epiphanius. He describes Antiochus as descended from one of the four *basileis* Alexander bequeathed his empire to. This is allegorically presaged by Daniel 8.2ff. – Adversus Judaeos V.6-7: PG47-48.893-894: BII.434-435. He also puts the chronology right concerning the prophecy of the destruction of the temple in Daniel 9.25. According to Chrysostom, this destruction took place under Pompey, Vespasian, or Titus, but not Antiochus. He then interpolates the succession of Persian *basileis* into this system. And finally Daniel's prophecy is corroborated by Christ Himself in Matthew 24.15 – Adversus Judaeos V.10: PG47-48.898: BII.442-43.

[24] C I Thess. 2.1: PG62.399-400: LF14.347.

[25] This is one of the occasions where a closer look at other traditions might be rewarding: G. Podskalsky, *Byzantinische Reichseschatologie. Die Periodisierung der Weltgeschichte in den 4 Großreichen (Daniel 2.7) und dem tausendjährigen Friedensreiche (Apokalypse 20)*, Münchener Universitätsschriften, Reihe der Philosoph. Fakultät 9 (Munich,1972), p.15 mentions how Ephraim the Syrian sees Alexander as particularly cruel.

had said that and after a little while the Roman Empire would be dissolved, they would now immediately have even overwhelmed him, as a pestilent person...He speaks here of Nero, as if he were the type of Antichrist. For he too wished to be thought a God.....For if there was found a man before that time, he means, who was not much behind Antichrist in wickedness, what wonder, if there shall now be one? Thus indeed he has spoken covertly, and he did not wish to point him out plainly, not from cowardice, but instructing us not to bring upon ourselves unnecessary enmities, when there is nothing to call for it....when the Roman Empire is destroyed, then he shall come. And naturally. For as long as the fear of this empire lasts, no one will willingly be subject to him, but when that is dissolved, he will attack the anarchy, and endeavour to seize upon the government both of men and of God. For as the kingdoms before this were destroyed, that of the Medes by the Babylonians, that of the Macedonians by the Romans: so will this be by Antichrist, and he by Christ, and it will no longer withhold. And these things Daniel delivers to us with great clearness.
C II Thess. 4.1: PG62.485-486: LF14.491-492

Thoughts like these probably speak to the heart of many contemporary church men when pondering the future. They explain the grudging acceptance of imperial rule. The considerable feeling of uneasiness about imperial rule is underlined by another commentary on Paul, which introduces the element of being under Roman law: it was because the apostles were followers of a man who proclaimed himself *basileus* that they laid themselves open to attack under Roman law.[26]

But one of the first historical *basileis* in the era of the New Law is Nero. There exist scathing passages by Chrysostom on the emperor Nero - of course as an antagonist of St. Paul - where not only the person of Nero or his bad rulership, but general royal attributes are denigrated, either by their association with him or in their own right. Thus the worthless diadem is opposed to the glory of Paul's chains, and the full variety of this theme will be explored in the chapter on Paul in Chrysostom's works.[27] After Nero, it is the continuing threat to Christendom, the reprisals and persecutions, the *basileus* stands for. The early persecutions are mentioned in a homily on the desirability of tribulations, and in connection with martyrs:[28]

> After Christ's arrival, there were pious and impious *basileis*. The greater part of the latter put the servants of Christ...to all sorts of tortures. The pious emperors have never used such persecutions and tortures on the infidel to make them abjure their error. Meanwhile, this error persists...

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[26] C I Corinth. V.5: PG61.46: BXVI.379. See also p. 95.

[27] The main passage on Nero is found when commenting C I Timothy 4.3-4: PG62.621D-624D.

[28] De gloria in tribulationibus 1: PG51-52.155-156: BV.232.

De s. Droside martyre 2: PG49-50.686: BIV.455

That is Chrysostom's special argument - the persecutions, the aggression and violence are one-sided, and he forcibly reiterates that Christian emperors have never passed such edicts against pagans.[29] He makes more specific references to these two kinds of *basileus*:

> Augustus, Tiberius, Gaius, Nero, Vespasian, Titus were idolaters, and all those who succeeded them to the time of the blessed Constantine; and all - more or less violently, but without exception - have made war on the church. If some seemed to show more humanity, the very fact that those ruling were so clearly in the power of impiety became the cause of war, because around them were always some courtiers that held their favour, and used them like a weapon against the disciples of the Gospel.
> **Contra Judaeos et gentiles quod Christus sit deus 15: PG47-48.833: BII.341**

Chrysostom also draws on the local history of Antioch. He describes demonstrations against imperial power in the shape of the governor of the city, as he whisks the bishop Meletius away in his carriage. Selflessly and living the Christian spirit, Meletius protects the head of the governor against the hail of stones with his cloak.[30] And Chrysostom parades pagan perversity in the context of the martyrdom of St. Babylas under a *basileus* 'whom I will not identify further than by the monstrous deed you are about to hear'. This *basileus* had slain a hostage prince, and Babylas thereupon denied him access to the church at Daphne.[31] Chrysostom expertly sketches the embarrassment of this situation for the *basileus* in his finery.[32] In the end, Babylas was martyred. Many years later the emperor Julian tries to build a temple to Apollo on the site, but Chrysostom points to the enduring power of holiness:

> The imperious monarch knew, as well as Apollo himself, the power of the blessed saint....Of the rulers of the empire, those who had committed comparable evils were soon smitten with protracted and terrible misfortunes, died amidst shame and pity.
> **De s. Babyla contra Julianum et gentiles 17: PG49-50.558-559: BIV.258-259**

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[29] De s. Babyla contra Julianum et gentiles 3: PG49-50.537: BIV.221.

[30] De s. Meletio Antiocheno 2: PG49-50.517: BIV.192.

[31] G. Downey, "The Shrines of St. Babylas at Antioch and Daphne", *Antioch on the Orontes II: The Excavations 1933-1936* (Princeton, 1938), p.45-47 tells that Babylas, Bishop of Antioch was martyred under Decius in 250. Julian had his body transferred to the main cemetery of Antioch because he planned the reconstruction of a temple to Apollo on the site of the saint's first burial in Daphne.

[32] De s. Babyla contra Julianum et gentiles 5.-6.: PG49-50.539-542: BIV.225-229.

And carrying on, Chrysostom draws on a range of horrific stories of terrible disease and misfortune befalling emperors who profanated holy sites and items. His homily and his treatise on St. Babylas thus really became what the subtitle implies: the most extensive and consistent argument against the pagan emperors of the past. In the end, these negative historical *basileis* are merged, resurrected and typefied in the person of Julian the Apostate. Julian visits Daphne, imploring Apollo for help in a famine, and encounters the powers of the body of St. Babylas jeopardizing his idolatry. Apollo is interpreted as a demon by Chrysostom, who offers the conclusion that as a demon, he really exists and is not just a projection.[33] Julian's attempt to reinstate the cult of Apollo is finally thwarted by a timely bolt of lightning destroying the temple. Chrysostom explains that Julian was spared from the fire so that he would have another chance to understand and repent - just like the biblical *basileis*. And Chrysostom describes how God tries to communicate with Julian - *e.g.* by scarcity of water after Julian offers pagan sacrifices at a fountain. But the *basileus* never takes the hint.[34]

The activities of Julian have already led into the 'contemporary' era. Essentially, I include in this bracket references to emperors, empresses, palaces and imperial actions that are related to Chrysostom's own lifetime and his experiences. Not all of those, of course, refer to the Apostate. Especially frequent are references to the unsavoury atmosphere of the earthly court, and the fullest comparison of that with the pure heavenly sphere follows:

> Today, seeing the spectacle of the *basileus* riding with a numerous escort of guards to his palace, we envy his close advisors who take part in his conversation and in his plans, who partake finally of his glory...we enter that glory...and see nothing but the splendour of the court, which albeit we know to be fleeting - because of wars and intrigues and denunciation... But where the *basileus* of the universe is concerned, who owns 'not a part of the earth, but all of its course'... do we not consider it supreme punishment not to enter the circle that surrounds him, will we be satisfied just to escape from hell? For that *basileus* has no team of white mules, nor a golden carriage, he does not wear purple and diadem when he comes to judge the earth...
> **Ad Theodorum lapsum 12: SC117.146**

The white mules in this passage have appeared before, and altogether one might ask why I did not discuss it when describing Chrysostom's references to the *basileus* in his environment.[35] But it is not missed in that chapter

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33 De s. hieromartyre Babyla 2: PG49-50.531

34 De s. Babyla contra Julianum et gentiles 22: PG49-50.567: BIV.273.

35 Especially on p.61-62.

because of numerous similar statements, and here it serves a useful purpose. It shows the intense feeling of *Aktualität* which Chrysostom creates simply with the word 'today'. One cannot identify the precise occasion to which he refers, and very likely there was no such occasion. But Chrysostom's description, even using his own stock imagery, reads even today as moving and real as if he was a reporter on a royal occasion. This is no accident, because part of his aim was without doubt to achieve this impression of simultaneity: while the very powers of this earth parade before our eyes, we have to turn our minds to that far higher power. While all this earthly authority and splendour operate, there always is that other level.

Apart from these considerations, intrigues in royal palaces and among top courtiers seem to fascinate Chrysostom and are frequently referred to.[36] And then Chrysostom is not general any more, but points straight to the present imperial family:

> Leave aside the old examples. Among the *basileis* of our generation - there are nine altogether - only two died a natural death.[37] As for the others: one fell under a tyrant, the other in war, yet another in a conspiracy of his own guards, another by the hand of the very man who got him elected and covered in purple. Of those around him some, so they say, died of poison, some of their misery...
> **Ad viduam iuniorem 4: SC138.136-40**

...and he continues with a vivid account on the various misfortunes and evils suffered by the entire imperial family, the fates of empresses at the hands of ruthless relatives, the unreliability of the guards, all enhanced by the character flaws of the individuals involved. And in the passage above, Chrysostom does not refer to a distant and above all *pagan* emperor, but to the contemporary dynasty of Christian rulers, and that makes it so explosive. It is not only living rulers, it is also institutions operating at the time that invite criticism.

Corruption and the unreliability of the tax system and the worry - shared by all tax payers of all ages - of what will become of one's hard-earned money are also themes. One passage relating to that has already been quoted in the chapter on Antioch.[38] There, it is a very practical point Chrysostom emphasises, advertising God's superior husbandry of his subjects' resources.

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[36] C Matthew 24.3: PG57-58.324B and Ad viduam iuniorem 3: SC138.126.

[37] See Note 2, SC138.136 for an identification of the rulers Chrysostom refers to here.

[38] C Matthew 66.5: PG57-58.631C-632A.

Even details like registration fees creep in, and then the assurance of greater profit - really not a spiritual method to turn souls to God. It is relatively rare that Chrysostom slides that far into a polemical style - maybe he was prompted by the very close and practical nature of the example he chose? Later in the same text, the relation between heavenly and earthly tax is explored in a different vein: 'Give to Caesar..' only what can be given without detracting from the fear and worship of God.[39]

After the fighting mood of most of these texts, there is one little statement which, although not changing Chrysostom's principle on the value of kingship, shows him more reconciled to it. He appreciates the present coexistence between the temporal and the spiritual power of the empire, the good fortune of Christianity. But still imperial rule is seen as a framework to be watched with a wary eye, not the indispensable other half of God's rule over the earth:

> We [Christians] are threatened neither by whips nor prisons, neither by rulers nor rabbis, nor anything else like that, but totally the opposite. It is we who order and rule. There are pious *basileis*, there is much honour for Christians, high positions, glory and liberty.
> **C Matthew 33.5 : PG57-58.394D-395A**

Chrysostom thanks God for this profound peace,[40] and rejoices in the fact that not only churchmen celebrate Easter, but that the *basileis* 'who rule this part of the world' also join in and have ordered their governors to suspend secular affairs.[41] But his attitude to pious *basileis* and to persecutions is not quite as unequivocal as this chapter implies so far. There is another side to him, viewing the so recently past heroic age of Christianity with something like a hankering:

> As long as a prince of our faith concerned with the glory of God comes to mount the imperial throne, the affairs of the faithful languish...When an impious *basileus* is in power persecuting us with a vengeance and multiplying the evils around us, all is prosperous and flourishing, it is the time of compensations and trophies, of crowns and proclamations.... For '*basileus*', you can also substitute the inhabitants of this city contributing to the pagan cult.
> **De s. Babyla contra Julianum et gentiles 8: PG49-50.544: BIV.234**

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[39] C Matthew 70.2: PG57-58.656D.

[40] De resurrectione mortuorum 2: PG49-50.420: BIV.47.

[41] In magnam hebdomadam 1: PG55.520: BX.92.

And a hint of double standards is implied in a remark Chrysostom makes in which he contrasts Julian's *laissez-faire* towards the Jews with the – in his eyes praiseworthy – anti-Jewish zeal of pious emperors.[42] So persecutions are permissible if aimed against another religion?

It seems that the overwhelming impression of this chapter must be to what a surprising extent Chrysostom generally sees the rulers of all ages in their context, looking at their specific situation, their problems, the climate of their times, and even at their personality. These characteristics indicate that Chrysostom looks towards rulers as towards individuals, albeit with an unusual task and responsibility, but basically as caught up in good and evil as the individuals in Chrysostom's flock. It is this compassion that in turn will greatly influence Chrysostom's peace of mind once he is in exile and tries to reconcile himself to what has happened.

One theme made itself very prominent in this chapter. The relationship between priests and rulers in all ages turned out to be almost inseparable from the discussion of the rulers themselves. The next chapter turns primarily to an exploration of this relationship as envisaged by Chrysostom. One arrives at having two superficially similar chapters, but the emphasis is slightly different, allowing different conclusions about each of the partners in this temperamental team of priest and ruler.

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[42] Adversus Judaeos V.11: PG47-48.900: BII.446-7.

7 Priest and *Basileus*

This is one of the most important areas of discussion, because the inherent conflict between ruler and priest in biblical and Christian history can be presumed to have done much to condition Chrysostom and thus influence his fate in Constantinople. Partly the relation between priest and *basileus* was explored in the previous chapter, in the context of Chrysostom's commentary on the story of Uzziah. However, there Chrysostom argued his point in terms of the biblical *basileus*. This chapter wants to lead on from there and concentrate on how Chrysostom saw priesthood in relation to earthly power in his own times.[1]

First of all, one should list some general characteristics Chrysostom sees in priesthood. One is that 'monk' and 'priest' are akin, the only difference being the continuous pastoral activity of the priest, and this kinship will be apparent in most of the texts employed in this chapter. But there are also some subtle differentiations, and in the end the priest comes out superior to the monk. Chrysostom draws attention to the divine authority of priests when commenting on the Psalms.[2] And monks are like angels:

> They have effectively embraced a way of life worthy of heaven, and their condition is in no respect inferior to that of the angels.
> **Adversus oppugnatores vitae monasticae 3.11: PG47-48.366: BI.181**

The virtuous life of monks and hermits leads directly to heaven, which is why parents should press their children to embrace the 'service to God', which would conduct them to heaven with the angels.[3] These definitions come both from Chrysostom's treatise defending the eremitical life. But two passages from 'De sacerdotio' put the monks beneath the priests. Monks become like angels, so do priests:

> Priesthood is administered on earth, but it has the rank of a heavenly institution. No man, angel, archangel instituted it but the paraclete

[1] If one pays attention to the nature of the texts used in this chapter, one will realize that it is different from the majority of this study in that the material comes mostly from a few major works - Chrysostom's treatises on the monastic life and on the pastoral office, and the homilies given in connection with the riot of 387, where he deals with the emperor being mollified by the bishop.

[2] C Psalms 108.2: PG55.260-61: BIX.285.

[3] Adversus oppugnatores vitae monasticae 3.20: PG47-48.384: BI.201.

himself...therefore whoever is ordained priest must be so pure as if he were to stand in heaven amongst angels...does that service not lift you to heaven?
De sacerdotio III.4: SC272.143

Priests are equal in purity to angels in heaven. In being charged by God with the administration of sacraments, their relationship with heaven is special and direct. In another passage, they do on earth what God does in heaven, and angels and archangels have no part in these offices.[4] Also monks can become heavenly, and somewhat remote in their purity with 'a soul purer than heaven, far from tumult and agitations of humanity'.[5] This statement is interesting because the region above heaven is characterised as 'peaceful' and free from confusion. In Constantinople these attributes will be given to heaven itself. The fascinating discovery is that even when Chrysostom simply wants to describe his concept of priesthood and its various aspects he often does so in terms of a comparison with earthly rule: priesthood is more demanding than being general or governing a realm because it calls for angelic perfection.[6] Another passage spins out this comparison and the *basileus* invariably finds himself being put in an inferior light. Chrysostom describes the responsibility of the divine office, to serve humans for God:

To me, there is nothing more beautiful than this service. The *basileus* is not more happy about diadem and purple than I feel honoured in this moment to be the servant of your love. Royal power lasts until death, but this service, if I duly fulfil its requirements, conducts me to the kingdom of the heavens.
De mutatione nominum II.1: PG51-52.124

Priests are princes, but the limitations of the *basileus*, the ephemeral nature of his power are not shared or experienced. Commenting on Psalm 44.17, Chrysostom says that Peter and Paul were grander than the *basileis* of this world - while the laws of *basileis* are often abolished, their laws are observed long after their death.[7] There are two sides to Chrysostom's perception of earthly laws. Here their instability is emphasized, while in another text, notably using an Old Testament example, it is illustrated how even *basileis* have to yield to laws. Chrysostom enlarges on III Kings 20.36ff. describing the relationship between prophet and *basileus*. The *basileus* pronounces his own sentence by judging an abstract case - when the same laws are applied to

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[4] De sacerdotio III.5: SC272.149.

[5] Adversus oppugnatores vitae monasticae 2.5: PG47-48.338.

[6] De sacerdotio VI.1: SC272.307 (VI.2).

[7] Contra Judaeos et gentiles quod Christus sit deus. 6: PG47-48.822: BII.321.

him, he is bound by them.[8] There is also the idea that the *basileus* is the victim of the trappings of his office, while the priest (or monk) is free:

> For the monk is not only more splendid than those in the palace, but even than him himself who wears the diadem, because of his torn and humble garment. Certainly he would not arouse so much admiration were he to show himself covered in gold, and also clad in purple, the crown on his head, seated on a chair of silk, drawn by superb mules, escorted by guards shining with gold; as he [the monk or hermit] does arouse with his neglected and repulsive outer appearance, wrapped in a coarse cloak, with bare feet, with not one servant following. That [splendid apparel] was what the laws prescribe for the *basileus*, and what is accepted by custom. And if someone would say in amazement that the *basileus* wears a cloak radiating with gold, we would not only not participate in this amazement, but we would even laugh, because there is nothing out of the ordinary there ...
> **Adversus oppugnatores vitae monasticae 2.6: PG47-48.340: BI.124-125**

This passage offers more food for thought than just helping to define priesthood. It vindicates the materialism of rulers as customary and expected by the population. This materialism may be regrettable as exactly the feature which keeps the *basileus* from rising to his ideal potential, and makes him a useful image to warn against worldly wealth, but the *basileus* is also still the best available image to describe the divine. This double role of the *basileus* has been described before, as has Chrysostom's ability to use an image both positively and negatively.[9]

The office of priesthood is lofty, but it does not carry with it the dangers of ambition and arrogance that is part of worldly hierarchies. Being offered priesthood, Chrysostom refuses the possibility of becoming bishop. On being accused of arrogance, he points that one cannot call it arrogance if he chooses an office that is high above any earthly kingship (he compares being bishop to having charge of a herd of oxen!), that is like taking up the rule over the whole world - and he wishes that angelic life would be treated within these parameters.[10] More to the point, Chrysostom realizes that once he is in that office (of bishop), the environment will subject him to the same political machinations as in the world of government, although he may not identify with these values:

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[8] Adversus Judaeos IV.2: PG47-48.873: BII.402-403.

[9] The double role appeared on pp.77, 88 and 102, Chrysostom's versatility on p.69, it will be found again on p. 124.

[10] De sacerdotio III.1: SC272.137.

> The same applies to the priest as to the tyrant. As long as a tyrant has the power in his hands, everybody fears him and flatters him because nobody is able to topple him. But when they see that the reversion of this is coming about, they cast off this role...those who were his friends up till now, all of a sudden turn into his opponents and enemies, and spotting his weaknesses attack him and rob him of his power. Just like those who recently showed all honour and attention to the priest when he gained his office, when they discover only a tiny weakness, machinate to remove him from his position not just as a tyrant, but as a much worse criminal. And just as the tyrant is then in fear of his guard, the priest has to fear his close environment and his colleagues most of all. For nobody is so jealous of his position and knows his conditions as well as they. For, being close to him, they realize any mistakes before everybody else and can by spreading evil gossip turn small mistakes into big crimes and thus engineer the fall of their victim.....Into such a fight you want to send me? And you really think, my soul is able to sustain such many and varied conflicts?
> **De sacerdotio III.14: SC272.185 (III.10)**

It seems that Chrysostom has no illusions about the survival rate of ideals once they are submitted to the pressures of a hierarchical society. But this apparent insight did not keep him from never qualifying his ideals and never compromising once he became bishop. The passage does seem prophetic, anticipating what befell him in Constantinople, but on the other hand the reluctance to enter the fray of ecclesiastical office-holding is almost a *topos* amongst fourth-century Fathers.[11]

At this point one should turn to the question of how Chrysostom as a priest wants to communicate with the head of human society, what sort of relationship he envisages with the *basileus*. The principle underlying most statements on this relationship is that priests (and monks) are a corrective influence on the *basileus* and are to point him to doing right - a direct continuation of the divine will the biblical rulers were meant to follow. Chrysostom holds that those men who upheld the firmest speech towards *basileis* were always monks.[12] One might argue that this sentiment is peculiar to this specific text, in which Chrysostom tries to convince Antiochene

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[11] This reluctance reflected the dilemma many of the Fathers felt in their youth when torn between the urge to perfect their own spirituality and the necessity to build up a viable ecclesiastical organisation. Gregory of Nazianzus resented his appointment by Basil of Caesarea to the see of Sasima - B. Altaner, *Patrologie. Leben, Schriften und Lehre der Kirchenväter* (Freiburg, 1951) p.256. He later also renounced the see of Constantinople in the face of difficulties, and on and off adminsitered his father's see of Nazianzus - Beck, *Rede*, p.11. Gregory of Nyssa was made bishop of Nyssa against his will by his brother Basil of Caesarea and was later deposed for several years - Altaner, *Patrologie*, p.261. Theodoret of Cyrrhus was unwillingly made bishop of Cyrrhus in 423 - Altaner, *Patrologie*, p.295. Chrysostom differs in that he does not think so much of his own spiritual perfection here, but finds that as a humble priest he can do much more for his flock than when rising in the ecclesiastical hierarchy.

[12] Adversus oppugnatores vitae monasticae 2.7: PG47-48.342: BI.129.

parents that their sons pursue a worthwhile 'career' when choosing the solitary life. If this was the case, the statements were nonetheless prophetic, for on a much later, equally unique occasion, Chrysostom describes the powerful intercession of the monks on behalf of Antioch after the riot of 387.[13] In this connection one should investigate how Chrysostom portrays such firm speech, as for example in his description of the conflict between Julian and Babylas. The plainly-dressed Babylas is contrasted with the pompous Julian, the modest Babylas denies entrance to the church to the arrogant *basileus*. Chrysostom sketches a situation of embarrassment for the *basileus*, and how much courage is needed on the part of the saint. Strength is apparently gained by the thought of the heavenly sovereign seated on the Cherubim, seeing the deepest abyss, on the high throne beyond the army of heaven, and a trail of last-judgement images follows.[14]

The justification of the existence of the *basileus*, and the task in which he needs this guidance, is his unfavourable role of being a necessary disciplinary force of humanity:

> The rulers threaten, therefore must the Church give comfort... So it happens...with little children. The teachers frighten them, and send them away weeping to their mothers... Since therefore the rulers also make you afraid, and render you anxious, the Church, which is the common mother of us all...administers daily consolation telling us that the fear of rulers is profitable...He [God] Himself has armed rulers with power, that they may strike terror into the licentious, and has ordained His priests that they may administer consolation to those that are in sorrow.
> **Statues 6.1: PG49-50.81C-D**

This is probably the most extensive statement on the intended role of both *basileus* and church society. There still is a comparison with a spiritual level, but again the *basileus* is not parallel to the divine power on that plane, but is portrayed as a necessary police force. On the other hand, priesthood is equated, as generally in Chrysostom, with the 'normal' angelic population. And on earth priesthood is described as the more natural partner of man, the first authority to turn to. That this distribution of roles is also an expression of superiority is emphasized early on in the text with the example of Elijah. Even as one of the first 'priests' correcting rulers his leather cloak is more splendid

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[13] Chrysostom describes the help given by 'the monks of the hills' in Statues 17.3: PG49-50.173, and corroboration is found in Theodoret of Cyrrhus' 'History of the Monks of Syria' - for references see p.45.

[14] De s. Babyla contra Julianum et gentiles 6: PG49-50.542: BIV.229.

than purple, and the cave more so than the halls of *basileis*.[15] This difference in value is highlighted even more in a direct comparison Chrysostom makes between the atmosphere of a palace and that of a church:

> And should you even enter into the royal halls, there again you would hear in the same way all discoursing of wealth, or power (*δυναστείας*), or of the glory which is held in honour here, but of nothing that is spiritual. But here on the contrary, everything relates to heaven and heavenly things... the discourses that are here [in church] made by us contain nothing at all of an earthly kind, but are all in reference to spiritual things.
> **Statues 10.2: PG49-50.112A-B**

The palace, where the concerns of the courtiers contain nothing spiritual and concentrate on ambition and wealth, is in this instance an anti-image. It is in church that the direct link with heaven is established. This idea is confirmed in the next passage, where it is the priest who holds the keys to heavenly splendour. However, this splendour is expressed by the motif of 'palace', now used as a positive image:

> Tell me, if wishing to see a palace resplendent with much gold, and radiant with the brightness of gems, you could find him who has the key, and he being called upon immediately opened it, and admitted you within, would you not have preferred him above all men?
> **C I Thess. 10.1: PG62.456: LF.442**

The motif of the doorkeeper has been encountered in connection with St. Matthew. - Chrysostom's ideas about the interrelationship between priest and *basileus* are firm: the priest is an angelic mentor, the *basileus* a doubtful, though necessary instrument. But how he expresses these ideas is more controversial - elements connected with the *basileus* are used to illustrate the priest's office, but they are also portrayed as negative. How does Chrysostom see the priest of his time in actual contact with the *basileus*?

Here this relationship is in balance, and examples of this balance can be found especially in the homilies given after the riot of the statues, where Chrysostom describes again and again how Bishop Flavius of Antioch visits the Emperor Theodosius to intervene for his guilty city. In the descriptions of this meeting one finds a fine catalogue of characteristics that are desirable in a *basileus*, and their matching counterparts in the bishop. There is an extensive passage of this kind, properly dramatized by a highly emotional setting of the tearful

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[15] Statues 2.25: PG49-50.46C.

scene in the palace.[16] The emperor's mercy gives him a splendour beyond his diadem. Both emperor and bishop weep with compassion for the misguided populace of Antioch. The emperor's bowels were rent with compassion. Like in an opera of the age of *verismo*, dramatic elements are exaggerated to act as a stronger signal for the audience. For obvious reasons, the emperor to be placated is portrayed as hurt in his good intentions, as kind, merciful, open to the entreaties of the bishop citing God's forgiveness, and citing Constantine as an example for not getting upset about a disfigured statue. There definitely is an element of taking the emperor to task and exhorting him to live up to this exemplary Christian ruler. But overall Theodosius is described very reverently, and to put this into the right perspective one should remember the peculiarities of this occasion. Firstly, the necessity of the moment to talk Theodosius into a relenting mood. The balance between emperor and bishop observed in that part of the homilies given on the riot is unique. Secondly, Theodosius from the Christian point of view was a relief and a welcome ruler – he was orthodox, and the Antiochene orthodox community had much to thank him for. He had been instrumental in confirming Meletius as the legitimate bishop of Antioch and in turning over the Great Church to Meletius and his staff, amongst whom was Chrysostom. Therefore the flattery with which I will round off this discussion might be the expression of a true sentiment:

> The approaching festival [Easter], which almost all, even unbelievers, respect, but to which this our divinely-favoured emperor has shown such reverence and honour as to surpass all the emperors who have reigned in true religion before him.
> **Statues 6.7: PG49-50.84B-C**

In conclusion, the priest and the *basileus* seem a temperamental team, and Chrysostom makes out that the relationship is strained at best and never troublefree. The two elements are only united once. Melchisedec (Genesis 14.18-20) was *basileus* and priest at the same time, and even then his function was to be a *typos* of Christ Himself .[17]

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[16] Statues 21.2: PG49-50.213-219.

[17] Adversus Judaeos VII.4: PG47-48.922: BII.480.

Appendix: The 'Comparatio regis cum monacho'

Among Chrysostom's works there is a treatise entitled 'Comparison (*σύγκρισις*) between a *basileus* and a monk', which seems to promise material relevant to the needs of this chapter.[18] Yet it must be treated separately, since its authenticity is doubtful. This doubt was expressed by some editors and translators, but the text has also been accepted by quite recent scholars. As it is potentially so important in the context of this chapter, I must put forward my own argument.

Savile judges the 'Comparison' inauthentic, but later revised his opinion, while Bareille calls it 'one of Chrysostom's most elegant pieces of work'.[19] Baur considers the 'Comparison' authentic and sees it as an exercise suggested to Chrysostom by Diodore of Tarsus, designed to be a Christian counterpart to Plato's comparison between a philosopher and a tyrant. Baur calls the work Chrysostom's '*literarische Erstlingsfrucht*' and accepts Montfaucon's dating of 375-376. He also emphasizes a close connection of this work with 'Ad Theodorum lapsum' and 'Adversus oppugnatores vitae monasticae' in terms of content and dating.[20] More recently, both Caius Fabricius and Robert E. Carter use it in their otherwise often disagreeing reconstructions of Chrysostom's early chronology and the tenuous links between him and Theodore of Mopsuestia. Fabricius judges the 'Comparison' to be Chrysostom's earliest work dating from between his time under Libanius' tuition and his decision to become a monk.[21] Carter agrees with that and dates the text to 368: 'The work shows the enthusiasm of first fervour and the naiveté of inexperience. The climate of the discourse is more that of the popular philosophy of the pagan schools than of Christian perfection'.[22] In a later article, Carter qualifies his views and acknowledges that the text is too doubtful to be the firm basis for chronological conjectures.[23] Geerard, based on Aldama and Carter, places the text among the 'Dubia et Spuria'.[24] A final decision seems to be still in the balance, and I

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18 PG47-48.387-393: BI.207-215.

19 BI.207, in the introduction to the edition and translation of the 'Comparison'.

20 Baur I, p.91-93.

21 C. Fabricius, "Vier Libaniusstellen bei Johannes Chrysostomus", *Symbolae Osloenses* 33 (1957) p.135-136.

22 R. Carter, "Chrysostom's *Ad Theodorum Lapsum* and the Early Chronology of Theodore of Mopsuestia", *Vigiliae Christianae* 16 (1962) p.99. He even postulates that Theodore was moved by the 'Parallel' to take up the monastic life - p.100.

23 Carter, *Chrysostom Studies*, p.20.

24 CPG 4500.

feel the need to promote my case because of the potential significance of this text to this thesis.

My first impression was that in comparison with the rest of Chrysostom's work the text seemed almost too neat, too elegant, too well wrapped up, and this impression made me think more systematically about arguments against Chrysostom's authorship. After giving a short précis, there are several aspects to consider: general format, content, and style.

The treatise covers about seven columns in both the Migne and the Bareille editions, and it is divided into four chapters. A short, elegant introduction explains that the author wants to describe how misguided is human love for material trappings and earthly honours, and how much superior is the spiritualized life of the monk. Then the author proceeds to evaluate different aspects of the life of a *basileus* and to contrast them with roughly comparable elements of the life of a monk. The sequence is opened with the theme of public honour and power. This is the longest and most complex comparison in the text, occupying close on one entire column, but it is subdivided into a succession of simple 'the *basileus*...the monk' sentences. Then the second chapter opens with the true *basileus* governing evil emotions, while the earthly *basileus* tries to control fickle moods of the populace. The next theme is that of the *basileus* in combat, the futility of war is emphasized and contrasted with the lasting victory the monk carries from his struggles. The third chapter turns to aspects of daily life, and the differences in sleeping, eating and social habits of monk and *basileus* are examined. Specific elements of the life of the *basileus*, such as travelling and ceremonial clothing, follow next, in contrast to the untroubled life of the monk. After emphasizing the social role of the monk, the rule of the *basileus* is defined as unjust, as favouring the rich and disregarding the poor, oppressing them further with taxation. The fourth chapter then looks at the form in which good is spread by monk and *basileus* respectively - charity and spiritual help are here contrasted with gold and high positions. A short excursus is made into biblical history - biblical rulers did well to ensure the spiritual support and intercession of the prophets. After this, it is pointed out that even if the monk should fail, he can correct himself and regain his former glory, while a *basileus*, once overthrown, can only recover with the help of troops and allies. The monk does not fear death and his body is an object of veneration, while the *basileus* is afraid of death and has constant reason to fear for his life. The treatise ends with the afterlife: the monk will dwell with Christ, while even a perfect

basileus can at best achieve glory inferior to that of the monk, and it is far more likely that a *basileus* will find himself suffering in hell. The final, slightly abrupt exhortation is to consider all these points when next beholding a *basileus* in his splendour.

In terms of format, the first observations are obvious. The treatise is very short. The authentic treatises mentioned in the course of this thesis, and even most of Chrysostom's homilies, are very much longer. And the 'Comparison' in its neat format looks too much like an intellectual exercise. 'Ad oppugnatores vitae monasticae', 'De sacerdotio', 'Ad viduam iuniorem' were not planned academic expositions, they were personal, partly even highly emotional statements born out of circumstances where Chrysostom either wanted to defend his aims, make a beloved fellow human being understand, or give solace in despair, and in doing so he often deviated from the proclaimed topic of a work. This element of personal involvement, despite the occasional use of the first person, is lacking in the 'Comparison', and it is also uncharacteristically concise. It only deals with monk and *basileus* and is one continuous, consistent comparison. Chrysostom was never so purist, quite the contrary, he often spans a multitude of themes and concerns of the Christian life under one harmless-looking title. He is driven from point to point in an organic fashion, as questions crop up. He switches metaphors, explains side issues. He never disregards the theme of his homilies or writings, but he does not let it harness him either.

Not only does the content of this text consist solely of comparisons between monk and *basileus*, the way in which the basileus is treated can also be seen to differ subtly from the characteristics observed in the thesis so far. The following *topoi* may seem familiar from Chrysostom: even if a *basileus* cultivates philosophy, he will never reach the same degree of virtue as a monk. And the *basileus* is always at the mercy of subjects - when travelling, in the palace, in peace and war. If he is vanquished, his subjects resent his misfortunes. Even if a *basileus* is temperate and sensible and only invites honourable men to his table, they will still be inferior to monks and priests. In the second chapter the monk is eulogized as 'a *basileus* like the one I would like to see reigning over land and sea...he who can keep his soul clean and in check would govern mankind according to the divine laws, would be a real father for his subjects. But one who rules and himself is slave of ambitions and emotions carries a crown of gold and gems, but not one of wisdom, he wears purple, but the soul is without ornament...' Chrysostom never inferred

that the imperfect *basileis* should cease to rule the world, so here there is even a doctrinal deviation. And Chrysostom never wrote with such complete lack of feeling about the shortcomings of the *basileus*. This author here seems almost gleeful, Chrysostom always considered the case of the *basileus* ensnared in evil and misfortune as tragic - for himself and everybody concerned.[25]

The difficulties are evident. This author's statements fit in deceptively well with the catalogue of Chrysostom's statements involving the *basileus*. Many tenets are familiar, and aberrations from authentic statements often consist simply of exaggerations, as when the military function of the *basileus*, fighting the barbarians, is considered a sign of 'avarice'.[26] It emerges that it is more by *how* something is said that doubts of authenticity are raised, than by simply examining the content of the text. This leads to the question of style and how these comparisons are worked. The actual comparisons in the 'Comparison' are very much to the point and their mechanics are different from Chrysostom's usual style. They are completely symmetrical: it is not easy to arrive at such a position as that of *basileus* and take up government, it is impossible for many, whereas to follow the solitary life is possible for everybody. Power deserts its followers even before death, but monks have a blissful tribunal beyond to look forward to. *Basileis* and people of authority rule cities, nations, armies. The monk commands rage, jealousy, greed, lust, vices and supports the soul without pleasures and without serving an evil system [meaning the possibility of a *basileus* sliding into tyranny]. These examples were taken from the second chapter, but the un-Chrysostomian technique of these repetitive back-to-back comparisons, often using '*ὁ μὲν...ὁ δὲ*' is conspicuous throughout. So in the third chapter: at night the monk is absorbed in prayer and lives among angels, the prince sleeps heavily on his couch. The one lives off nourishment that does not make much sleep necessary, the other has by breakfast-time barely recovered from draughts and pleasures. All these examples lack one essential quality that was always observed in Chrysostom's use of the *basileus*: the development of a scenario, a more colourful and complex image. Such litanies of one juxtaposition after the other go on for lengthy passages, which in itself is an argument against Chrysostom's authorship - he so far has never been found to amass the same

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[25] Ad viduam iuniorem 4, cited on p.116, for example.

[26] Statues 6.1, cited on p.123, contrasts with this: the emperor has his power because he is a necessary disciplinary force.

kind of statement about the *basileus* repetitively in the same text. If he wants to labour a point, he tends to do so by using different means in turn.

Another useful criterion for establishing authenticity is the terminology employed in these comparisons. A full examination of this aspect would involve computer analysis of texts both authentic and inauthentic, and this is beyond the present scope of this thesis. But I would like to list some few expressions that appear in connection with the *basileus* in this text and that have not been observed in any of the passages quoted in the thesis. For example, the *basileus* is preceded by heralds (*κηρύκων*) in the first chapter. The imperial crown is called *στέφανος* rather than the customary *διάδημα* - Chrysostom tends to use *στέφανος* only in a martyrial context. This un-Chrysostomian use reappears in the second chapter, where *στέφανος* is used once for the imperial crown made of gold and gems, and once for the monk's spiritual crown of victory. At the beginning of the third chapter, some verbs appear in connection with heaven which I have not observed in authentic texts: '*ἀγγέλοις συμβιοτεύοντα, θεῷ συλλαλοῦντα, τῶν οὐρανίων ἀγαθῶν ἀπολαύοντα*'.[27] - These are just some rudimentary and quite preliminary observations, but I think they help to make a point.

What arguments are there for authenticity despite these obvious disparities? One weak explanation is that the treatise is so stilted because it was really written, while most of Chrysostom's work was delivered orally, *ex tempore* in the first place. But then 'Ad viduam iuniorem' and the other texts mentioned above were surely written by Chrysostom himself, and they are just as vivid and immediate and warm as his homilies.

To my instinct, the 'Comparison' has nothing of Chrysostom's personality about it, which surely must have been quite defined at any age and which comes out alive in other early texts. And, if the 'Comparison' was written when Chrysostom was so young, how is it that he so neatly summarizes all his major thoughts about monks and *basileus* which really developed in the fullness of his preaching which only gathered momentum almost a decade later?

To me, the most likely explanation for the 'Comparison' seems to be that another person - contemporary or later - compiled an anthology of

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[27] Translation: 'they are living with the angels, they are talking with God, they enjoy the heavenly goods'.

Chrysostom's statements regarding the superiority of the monk to the *basileus* and gave it this form of a continuous text. It really does incorporate most points Chrysostom makes in various contexts. This possibility would also fit in with the 'elegance' of the text, which in itself seems to me an argument against it - Chrysostom was concerned with the building of souls, not with the construction of showpieces. But an imitator may have aimed to capture this natural gift of flowing speech by carefully polished language. This proves to be a giveaway. There are no contradictions in this text, no complex thought processes, no simultaneity of apparently different concepts - all characteristics which even in the course of the thesis so far already emerged as hallmarks of Chrysostom's preaching, thinking and writing.

8 Imperial Attributes and Heavenly Symbols

This chapter seems to come somewhat abruptly after the last. It is concerned with an issue that accumulated in the discussions of all the various themes introduced so far. For when reading Chrysostom's work, and especially when looking at his God-*basileus* parallel, one realizes that he himself employs a few symbols constantly, as signals standing for a certain institution, a value, or even an emotion. This tendency has been apparent in many of the samples from his work used in this study so far. In this chapter Chrysostom is made to speak about these symbols themselves - about their importance in general, as regards both authority and faith, about the significance of individual symbols, and about how he uses them in the exhortation of the faithful and in explaining the heavenly spheres. Chrysostom holds that symbols, itemized carriers of specific meanings and implications, are essential to human faith. He accuses the Jews of inadequacy in this matter:

> Where have the altar, the ark, the tabernacle, the Holy of Holies, the priest, the Cherubim of glory, the golden sceptre, the sanctuary, the vessel, the burnt offerings, the fire descended from heaven all gone to? You have lost all these things, and preserve nothing but the trumpets! - You can see, their cult is a game and not a cult.
> [Repeated in V.1]
> **Adversus Judaeos IV.7: PG47-48.881-882: BII.415**

In the context of the New Law the importance of these symbols as well as those of worldly authority is superseded by that of the cross:

> It is not only private individuals, but *basileis* themselves who prefer it to the diadem and title, for is it not worth a thousand times more than all the diadems of the earth? The diadem is a simple ornament for the head, the cross is the salvation of the world.
> **C Psalms 109.6: PG55.274: BIX.342**

The juxtaposition of cross and diadem is strong and unmitigated here. And later in the same text the triumph of the cross is emphasized again, meaning its power in 'this [Chrysostom's] age', as opposed to the bad times under Julian, Maximin and the early emperors, in which context obviously Babylas is mentioned again.[1] The cross is frequently put into this relation with

[1] C Psalms 110.4: PG55.285: BIX.362.

earthly symbols. 'Everybody prefers that [the cross] to crowns, diadems, the most precious diamonds'.[2] This statement introduces the negative taste of imperial paraphernalia, but central attributes of faith are also explained on a mundane level. Surprisingly, Chrysostom sets behaviour in the hippodrome as an example for behaviour in the matters of faith, commenting on Romans 2.29 'The glory comes not from men, but from God':

> Have you not observed, friend, also in the hippodrome, that the contestants do not pay any attention to the applause of the people, to the acclamations of the multitude seated in the ranks, and do not derive joy from it; that they only pay attention to the person of the *basileus* seated in the middle, that they depend on the slightest movement of his face, as if the crowds did not exist, that they are only satisfied when they receive the crown from him? Imitate them...
> **C Genesis V.6: PG53-54.54: BVII.68**

This is a direct positive comparison between God and *basileus*. There appears but one symbol - the crown here has earthly and heavenly connotations at the same time. This is also one of the rare occasions when Chrysostom uses the hippodrome, the implied counterpart of which is the church, in a positive sense. Direct positive comparisons are also made using imperial titles and acclamations. The Seraphim in Isaiah 6.3 call God 'holy...the Lord of hosts', just like one uses his title when acclaiming a *basileus* .[3] The complexity of titles both for God and for the *basileus* also appears:

> Anne was not content with just one name to call the Lord, she employs as many as she can find, proof of her love towards him and the intensity of her feelings. Just as in supplication to the *basileus* one puts not just his name, but the titles of 'the victorious, the augustus, the autocrator' and many others like that which one puts on the plea...
> **De Anna I.5: PG53-54.640: BVIII.411**

These pure parallels are not disturbed by any negative connotations of titles or of the act of acclamation. There is one other royal attribute to which that applies:

> Just as when a simple man dares to take the royal purple robe and with his partisans is put to death as tyrants and rebels, so those who pronounce sentences of lordship and commit a man to the anathema of the church risk their own downfall, usurping the dignity of the son.
> **De anathemate 3: PG47-48.948-949: BII.520**

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[2] Contra Judaeos et gentiles quod Christus sit deus 9: PG47-48.9: BII.330.

[3] De instituenda secundum deum vita 4: PG51-52.45: BV.56.

And Chrysostom says that 'tearing apart the imperial purple or tarnishing it with mud is offending the prince who wears it', using the tarnishing of the purple as a metaphor for injuring the sacramental mysteries, which is tantamount to injuring God.[4]

In connection with the cross, the lower value of the diadem already appeared. One should, however, draw attention to a problem of terminology in this context. Chrysostom employs both 'diadem' and 'crown'. The main difference seems to be that 'crown' is predominantly used for the description of matryrs, as a reward for Christian virtue and similar contexts, while 'diadem' is predominantly employed in an imperial context. And there exists a passage that seemingly expresses the higher value of the crown in relation to the diadem: the bride joining the groom with her head ornate with divine benedictions thus wears a crown more splendid than all diadems.[5] But even the positive power of 'crown' has its limits. Commenting on Paul's 'I rejoice in you more than in a crown' Chrysostom says that 'crown' was simply inadequate to express the splendour.[6] But the weight of these statements does not mean that the diadem is always negative. There is an unusual case of a man seemingly committing a criminal act, which results in the diadem doing good almost despite itself: a man taking a precious stone out of an imperial diadem and selling it can make substantial material profits - just as the Christian can gain spiritual riches by penetrating the meaning of 'just any divine word'.[7] This positive impression of the diadem is easily counterbalanced, and again it is the figure of Abraham, the ideal *basileus* without titles and insignia, which is used to put earthly *basileis* in their place. Abraham and Sara are in Egypt and Sara pretends to be Abraham's sister:

> The diadem that circles the head of a *basileus* does not highlight his majesty so much as this obedience she proves in that moment shows the glory and beauty of that blessed woman.
> **C Genesis 32.6: PG53-54.300: BVII.478**

There are many more statements and comparisons - a considerable number already appeared in this study - these are simply those that refer quite clearly just to crown and diadem, clarifying their value.[8] But after having discerned

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[4] Non esse ad gratiam concionandum1: PG49-50. 653-654: BIV.406.

[5] In illud: *Propter fornicationes uxorem* III.9: PG51-52.239: BV.364.

[6] C I Thess. 3.3: PG61.409: LF14.364.

[7] De mutatione nominum IV.4: PG51-52.150: BV.220.

[8] There is also an isolated reference to the girdle, or belt, with basileian connotations (De legislatore 3: PG56.403: BX.584). This motif does not appear anywhere else in Chrysostom. And this circumstance again points to the peculiar phenomenon of how

descriptions of isolated attributes, one should turn to the atmosphere and environment of the palace. That means the combinations of these elements, ideas and behaviourisms that are seen as 'royal', 'kingly', 'imperial' or just as invariably connected with royal persons as a decisive signal of royal status. Some do not even compare the earthly *basileus* with God, but with something else - still they are included, because one should be reminded that '*basileus*' as a measuring stick is not exclusively used to explain God's dominion. As a first passage I choose one in which Chrysostom explores these very signals which define a *basileus*, and how they work on the beholder. It is almost an exploration of a stream of consciousness:

> What then is the habit of most persons? Often when any have seen a *basileus* richly decked, and glittering on all sides with precious stones, and are afterwards describing to others the beauty, the ornaments, the splendour, they enumerate as much as they can, the glowing tint of the purple robe, the size of the jewels, the whiteness of the mules, the gold about the yoke, the soft and shining upholstery. But when after enumerating these details, and other things beside these, they cannot, say what they will, give a full idea of the splendour, they immediately bring in: 'But why say much about it, once and for all, he was totally like a *basileus*', not desiring by the expression 'like' to show that he, of whom they say this, resembles a *basileus*, but that he is a real basileus. Just so now the Evangelist has put the word 'As', desiring to represent the transcendent nature and incomparable excellence of his glory. For indeed all others, both angels and archangels and prophets, did everything as under command; but he [Christ] with the authority which becomes a *basileus* and master ... taught as one having authority.
> **C John 12.1: PG59.82B-C**

This excerpt provides a catalogue of attributes which Chrysostom obviously considered royal, and which, being anything but unknown from other texts, seem in fact to be stereotypes: the glowing tint, the purple robe, size of jewels, whiteness of the mules...and this particular string of images obviously describing a carriage or procession again ties in with previous appearances of the same theme.[9] For all these images Chrysostom seems to have used the same source - be it his own experience, an eye-witness account or a written description. What is more important, though, is the way in which Chrysostom describes these signals as something like inadequate stepping-stones towards expressing the total reality. Finally he inverts the descriptive process and introduces '*basileus*' itself as a defining term, by

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Chrysostom's use of individual symbols can even help in establishing the authenticity of some of his texts. As can be gleaned from the passages involved in this chapter, throne, diadem, purple, statue are terms Chrysostom uses again and again. But as regards *τιάρα, πέταλος, λίθοι* and a list of precious stones in De legislatore 4: PG56.404-405: BX.586, all these terms are usually not employed by Chrysostom, and as it turns out, this homily is by Severianus of Gabala, CPG 4192.

[9] C Romans 15.10: PG60.537D-538A and C Matthew 37.2: PG57+58.421A respectively.

which a whole range of accessories and attributes, even of moods and atmospheres is implied and triggered automatically. And it is *this* process of introducing a single evocative signal term that is then lifted onto the spiritual plane in this passage, comparing the method - rather than the detail - of expressing '*basileus*' to that of expressing 'God'. Then follows another interesting statement, that angels, archangels and prophets acted under command as under authority , but more direct comparisons between *basileus* and God as commanders will be investigated in due course.

This is not the only passage where Chrysostom analyses the effectiveness of signals. In the context of Baptism he describes imperial officials as recognizable by the imperial image on their dress, and that also Christians should wear the royal image as a badge of Christianity on their lives.[10] This royal image is of course again the cross. It is now introduced as a coat of arms and in this function is used for a direct and positive comparison. And, in connection with martyrdom, robbers do not steal precious armour if it bears the imperial seal, and thus behave just like demons that flee the tombs of the martyrs. But in the course of this same passage, the positive comparison between imperial seal and holy cross is immediately counterbalanced:

> The imperial crown is decorated with a thousand gems sparkling in a thousand different hues - but the bodies of the holy martyrs, decorated with wounds received for Christ, like precious gems, are more venerable and sublime to us than the whole imperial diadem.
> **De Macabeis I.7: PG49-50.617-618: BIV.352**

The motif of the protective coat of arms is used also in the context of the Second Coming. When a *basileus* enters a city, the soldiers wear his arms on their shoulders heralding his arrival - just as God sends armies of angels wearing the cross on their shoulders, 'announcing to us the royal adventus (*εἴσοδον*).[11] It should be observed that this coat of arms, the cross, is part of the clothing of the Christian soul and of the uniform of the guards respectively. The clothing of both *basileis* and the soul comes in again in yet another passage, where it is explained that just as it is flowery and colourful decoration that make the purple into a royal robe, it is virtues out of which love of God is formed.[12] Then there is another theme under this heading. It involves purple and diadem and physical attractiveness as signals of a royal

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[10] Catecheses ad illuminandos 4.17: SC50.191-92.

[11] De cruce et latrone I.4: PG49-50.404: BIV.21 [repeated in II.4].

[12] C Matthew 79.4: PG57+58.722C.

personality, but interestingly it focuses on becoming, rather than being, such a personality:

> As if somebody makes one who is defaced through age... into a handsome youth... and dressed him with purple, diadem and all royal fittings - thus God has fitted our soul and made it beautiful, attractive and adorable. For the angels want to behold such a soul, the archangels, all other heavenly powers!
> **C Ephesians 1.3: PG62.14A**

The comparison here lies in the desirability of being lifted onto the topmost respective level - being *basileus* on earth, being an acceptable soul in the spiritual sphere. Implied again is a court surrounding the 'new *basileus*' , parallel to the heavenly beings. The same element of desirability can be found in another text - again it is assumed that becoming *basileus* is the highest possible aspiration on earth, and should be even more so in heaven, where 'kingship' is not limited to one carrier at a time, but is available to all pure souls - this concept, though, detracts somewhat from the idea of a heavenly hierarchy.[13] An interesting detail: in this passage the earthly golden royal dress becomes equated with incorruptibility and immortality. And there emerges yet another type of royal attribute, which could link this discussion with what is maybe the most central and complex of all Byzantine issues:

> For if artists enjoy such great honour for making the statues of the *basileus* or painting his images, so shall not we for representing God's image, for man is the image of God, enjoy eternal bliss, provided we make it similar to the point of speaking.
> **C Ephesians 21.4: PG62.154C-D**

Again a direct comparison God-*basileus*, the fact of being portrayed being part of a royal set-up. But this facet of royalty is not given importance as a signal automatically evoking royal connotations. Its importance lies elsewhere: again in the equalizing factor. One *basileus* has one or two artists. The one God has all humanity to be his image - moreover, to be this image and live up to it must be seen as central to the relationship God - man. Statues and imperial effigies are used frequently to define and also to show the limitations of imperial importance. Chrysostom states that simple materials can portray the characteristics of *basileis* precisely like gold and other precious media - just as both rich and poor men are in the royal image

[13] Ad viduam iuniorem 3: SC138.130-32.

of God, and none more so simply because he commands earthly honours.[14] But statues can also have more positive connotations:

> Do you not see so many distressed persons taking refuge at the foot of statues? Even though the material is insensible, the bronze has no soul: but because the statues reproduce the figure of the *basileus*, one expects to get some help at their feet. And you, when you perceive not dead material, no insensible feet, but a living statue, carrying in itself your *basileus*, presenting itself before you, do you not run towards it, I ask you?
> **De viduis 13: PG51-52.333: BV.518**

These statements are reminiscent of the numerous negative references to imperial statues that were examined under the heading of the limits to the earthly *basileus*, only that here this image is used positively. For example, Chrysostom explains that just as on royal icons the actual picture is above and the inscription below, in Scripture the image comes first and the explanation often much later.[15] And this motif especially introduces the wide field of comparisons between imperial symbols and scripture. It shows that the *basileus* as a translation for God is also employed to explain the importance and the use of his Word. 'Having the gospel and a little chest for the poor at home is like having meat in store for the *basileus*'.[16] Chrysostom wishes that Christ may unveil the Gospel, for royal ornaments under a veil profit nobody.[17] The motif is also applied to the never-ending task of making the Christian aware of his duties. Chrysostom says about negligent reading of Scripture that 'we' [the flock] are sloppy in our attention to the lessons during service while nobody would dare to read an imperial edict in this fashion.[18] The aim is to make his flock live in expectance of and in a state of preparation for the *basileus*, and in this respect Chrysostom links the earthly and the heavenly *basileus* on an equal footing. The same comparison is used again to enhance discipline in church:

> Let us concentrate again on the meaning of our text, aim all your thoughts at it without distraction, without interruption, without material preoccupations, for we find divine laws in it coming from heaven and given for our salvation. If, when imperial letters are read, profound silence reigns, and no noise or disturbance occurs, everybody lending an attentive ear and willing to know what wishes are expressed by the

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[14] John Damascene gives this as a quote from Chrysostom in De Imag.III, it is edited in PG49-50.627-28 and obviously came from a text that did not survive.

[15] In principium Actorum I.3: PG51-52.71: BV.95.

[16] C I Corinth. 43.4 (I Corinth. 16.9): PG61.373: LF9.613.

[17] C II Corinth. 2.6 (II Corinth. 1.10-11): PG61.400: LF27.27.

[18] In illud: *Domine, non est in homine via eius* 3: PG56.158: BX.348.

> imperial letters, and greatest danger would arise from the slightest interruption; how much more does one have to observe that here...
> **C Genesis 14.2: PG53-54.112: BVII.167**[19]

Here the comparison is even closer, as it is a message from the *basileus* to his people in both cases. These methods with which the importance of Scripture is described also lead back to the motif of the coat of arms and its power in the following complex combination:

> Let us always have with us the treasure of Scripture. In the degree it grows, gold creates ever more dangers for those who possess it; while the scriptural books afford us the most precious advantages. The royal arms on the walls of some house, even if one does not use them, are there as a protection and safeguard of the inhabitants - thieves, even the most daring criminals do not dare to attack that house, neither by tricks nor by open violence. Just like that, wherever that scriptural work is, men are safe from the assaults of demons.
> **De Lazaro III.2: PG47-48.993-994: BII.590**[20]

In many of these passages Chrysostom works with basic human emotions - the need for security, the yearning for personal advancement. The method of enticement by greater gains is also followed in another context. Once again, Chrysostom wants to discipline his flock, saying they observe greater silence when an imperial edict is read in the theatre than when the laws of God are announced in church, and then follows a clear statement on the inferiority of the Empire: the theatre is the place for dreams, while the harsh truth is to be found in the streets of the city.[21] What sounds like a continuation of that image actually comes from a completely different text:

> But He who sent us these texts [the laws] is much greater than this ruler, and the theatre much superior, for in it there are not only men, but also angels and archangels, and the prizes promised there...are much more magnificent than those one wins in earthly contests. Therefore not only we humans, but also the angels and archangels, the armies of heaven and all the inhabitants of the earth shall praise the Lord.
> **C Matthew 19.9: PG57-58.285B**

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[19] Liebeschuetz, *Antioch*, p.106 describes the background to this. Upon arrival of an imperial letter, the governor would summon the principal citizens for a public reading. The 'danger' in this quote refers to the severe punishment of any noise or disturbance.

[20] Possibly Chrysostom uses an element of Antiochene life here: excavations showed that ornaments and inscriptions on houses were popular in the city. These inscriptions were often Christian, consisting of short prayers or biblical quotes invoking God's blessing and protection - G. Downey, *Antioch in the Age of Theodosius the Great* (Norman, Oklahoma, 1962) p.133.

[21] De Lazaro VI.5: PG47-48.1034: BII.656-7.

And again the superiority of the poor man over the *basileus* is illustrated using a whole range of imperial symbols of power :

> The soul of the poor man is not like that, at least not that of a voluntary pauper. It shines like gold, glimmers like a pearl and blossoms like a rose. There is no moth, no thief, no worldly care. They live like angels. - Do you want to behold the beauty of such a soul? Do you want to know the riches of poverty? The pauper does not order humans but demons. He does not stand near *basileis*, but he is in God's vicinity. He does not go on campaign with humans, but with angels...his servants are the inclinations by which even *basileis* are defeated. Temptation which forces itself on the purple-robed fears him. Kingship, gold and all else he laughs at as toys...he has heaven for a floor... but he has no horses and carriage. What would he need that for, when he will move on clouds and be with Christ?
> **C Matthew 47.4: PG57-58.486B**

Imperial accoutrements are described not only as intrinsically worthless, but even as harmful. And the person of the earthly *basileus* itself comes under attack. The *basileus* seated on his throne wearing his diadem is, predictably by now, less august than the righteous man mastering evil passions. Purple, gold and jewelled crowns do not help the enslaved soul.[22] These are the passages that take on a completely new meaning when one imagines them in the imperial environment of Constantinople, like the following quote contrasting the material with the spiritual world:

> We learn not to overestimate the life of this world...to look for that eternal and heavenly kingdom, not to attach ourselves to things down here, neither bodily beauty, nor abundance of riches, amount of property, gleam of jewels, the magnificence of buildings, the value of titles - be it civil or military, nor purple or diadem, nor the variety and preparation of feasts, nor the refinement of luxuries, nor any of the things that charm our senses - but bid it farewell without return, and strive without flagging for that celestial kingdom.
> **De instituenda secundum deum vita 4: PG51-52.45-46: BV.56f**

The spiritual realm is expressed in terms of a kingdom because this image is the best available. Nonetheless even the greatest honours of any earthly kingdom are worthless by comparison. And Chrysostom once decisively disconnects royal imagery from spiritual kingship: Christ is *basileus*, but no shieldbearers or teams of mules surround him.[23] His life was unsightly and poor. He is *basileus* of the heavenly sphere, yes, but according to this

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[22] Adversus eos qui ad collectam non occurrerunt 4: PG51-52.177-178: BV.262.

[23] C Matthew 6.1: PG57-58.62D.

statement that kind of kingship would have nothing to do, nothing in common with the earthly variety.

Can Chrysostom also be negative about this idea of earthly kingship as such? It is difficult to find what would be defined as 'institution' by Chrysostom. Some statements concerning rule and government were already found and discussed when exploring the ideal *basileus*. No negative counterparts questioning royal rule in general were found. The negative statement, much more subtly, consists rather of these very passages that form the substance of this chapter: numerous explanations and comparisons involving the paraphernalia, the tell-tale signals of royalty, especially diadem, gold and purple. Again, a sample:

> For what is the use for a *basileus* of being resplendent in purple and armour if he did not have a single subject...Just as that [*basileus*] in diadem and purple by his dress not only does not gain in dignity, but even makes it ridiculous by the offence to his person...thus the faithful leading a depraved life is ridiculous.
> **C Romans 12.5: PG57-58.751A**

Instances bearing out the impression made by this passage are numerous. With John the Baptist the hair shirt is more royal than any rich robes, and the child still prefers its mother to the however beautiful *basilissa* with her diadem.[24] The simple house of the true Christian is worth more than royal palaces.[25] And in a different text, prison is described as a *παλαίστρα* for the martyr [as distinct from *βασιλικόν*?].[26]

So while Chrysostom continually uses 'purple' and 'diadem' as signals of royalty, as defining kingship, in his instructive comparisons he mostly detracts from their value. Maybe that should alert us to the degree to which signals of this kind are used unconsciously by both sender and receiver. On the other hand, this is not a sufficient explanation in the case of Chrysostom, and one should get used to thinking that his use of imagery is not fixed. Certain images are not tied to certain values. This seems to apply above all to the image of the *basileus*.

This chapter concludes the survey of the role of the '*basileus*' in Chrysostom's Antiochene work. The wealth of diverse meaning this term

[24] C Matthew 62.4: PG57-58.601A.
[25] C Matthew 83.4: PG57-58.751A.
[26] In s. Barlaam martyrem 2: PG49-50.678: BIV.440.

can have was roughly grouped under thematic headings, but it became apparent that the boundaries between such classifications are mobile. This last chapter, looking at both imperial and heavenly symbols - for the latter only the cross could be identified - tries to build the bridge to the next task. The *basileus* is part of a combined image, the other part, heaven, remains to be investigated.

9 Chrysostom and Heaven

> How can I explain the necessary things if you only come to listen once or twice a year? The soul, the body, immortality, the kingdom of the heavens, the punishments of the Lord, hell, misery and the goodness of God, penitence, baptism, remission of sins, the creatures that populate this inferior world, those that populate the upper world, the nature of man, the nature of the angels, the evil of demons and their methods against us, how to behave in society, dogmatic points, the true faith, heresies and their corruptive influence - those are some of the questions no believer must ignore, and to which one must always be ready to respond.
> **De baptismo Christi 1: PG49-50.364: BIII.612**

In this exasperated outburst, already quoted when examining his attitude to his audience, Chrysostom makes it clear that he wants to explain and describe heaven and its population.[1] If he is of the opinion that heaven is above description, he does not say so here, he seems to intend to make allowance for his flock's need of images. And as it turns out, Chrysostom's references to the heavenly sphere during the Antioch period are numerous and varied.

It makes sense to explore Chrysostom's heaven in orderly sequence. These first few introductory pages want to summarize Chrysostom's concept of the cosmos, and how to ascend to heaven. The subsequent two chapters explore what his heaven looks like, and who is there and in what relation to each other these inhabitants stand. In all these subgroups, special interest is once again focused on the use of terminology connected with earthly *basileis* in heavenly descriptions. Elements taken from the environment of the *basileus* simply are the language in which heaven is described. An assessment as to what extent this reflects Chrysostom's conviction may be attempted at the very end of the discussion of heaven.

Where is Chrysostom's heaven? Is he a precursor of Cosmas Indicopleustes, advocating a tiered universe modelled after the tabernacle?[2] There is some indication of that: Chrysostom sees tabernacle and universe as interdependent, with curtain and firmament dividing both in 'this side' and

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[1] The passage was quoted on p.55.

[2] *Cosmas Indicopleustés – La Topographie Chrétienne*, ed. + transl. W. Wolska-Chonus, I:SC141 (1968), II:SC159 (1970), III:SC197 (1973). Part I, Books I-IV, Introduction Ch. 5-6, SC141.267.

what is 'invisible and inaccessible'.[3] But any references to the structure of the world (as opposed to world order) are very rare in Chrysostom's work. The few statements he makes are found almost exclusively in one text, his commentary on Genesis. This is not surprising - there he has to react to and explain the biblical cosmos, a challenge other Fathers tackled in their commentaries on the Hexaemeron.[4] But Chrysostom seems reluctant to take up this challenge. Commenting on 'In the beginning' (Genesis 1.1), he does not launch into cosmic reconstructions. He seems to consider these phrases like a metaphorical prophecy and 'reconstructs' half-heartedly for a few sentences,[5] but then turns to simply emphasizing God's power over the elements in general.[6] And soon he openly discourages even the idea of attempting an explanation of the cosmic elements of Genesis - 'we must accept what is said with more modesty than understanding'.[7] This puts him into stark contrast to the more scientifically minded Cappadocians. Once, in a passage where he refutes the possibility of several heavens, he finds the text of Genesis so baffling that he points to the problematic contradictions of the Septuagint, to be blamed on faulty translation.[8]

Chrysostom's non - committal attitude extends to other elements besides the number of 'heavens'. Stars, prompting the Cappadocians to lengthy metaphors, are revered for their beauty by Chrysostom, but no further analysis is attempted.[9] The goodness of God is visible in the beauty of creation, as in the choir of stars.[10] And on the problem of the Garden of Eden Chrysostom has to say that when God planted a garden in Eden in the East this does not mean God was a gardener on earth, but that he determined the order of the garden.[11] He simply wants to leave the definitions given in Scripture stand as they are in this context. In this mood, speaking on the order in the universe, both in a cosmic sense and amongst human society, Chrysostom says that harmony in the universe is only disturbed by man with

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[3] In diem natalem 3: PG49-50.354-356: BIII.597-599 and In illud: *Habentes eundem spiritum* I.4: PG51-52.275.

[4] S. Giet, *Basile de Césarée – Homélies sur l'Hexaéméron*, SC 26 (1949). J.Daniélou and J. Laplace, *Grégoire de Nazianze – La Création de l'Homme*, SC6 (1943).

[5] C Genesis 3.1: PG53-54.32: BVII.32.

[6] C Genesis 4.2-3: PG53-54.40-42: BVII.46-47.

[7] C Genesis 4.3: PG53-54.42: BVII.47.

[8] C Genesis 4.3-4: PG53-54.42-43: BVII.48-49.

[9] C Genesis 6: PG53-54.54-61: BVII.72ff.

[10] C Psalms 144.2: PG55.467: BX.7.

[11] C Genesis 13.3: PG53-54.107-108: BVII.159-160.

his emotions and patterns of behaviour.[12] Just as man disturbs the original message of Scripture, he also disturbs the universe. Despite this somewhat reserved outlook as far as the cosmos is concerned, the existence of heaven itself is always underlined. And the cosmos can come in as a carrier of divine beauty, ultimately finding its peak in heaven itself and the heaven of heavens.[13] Heaven in the plural is not rare. The smoke of the altar ascends to the throne of the *basileus* above the heaven of heaven.[14]

Concentrating on just heaven, one should look at all the variations of heaven itself and how it can be defined. On the one hand, heaven is equated with the Godhead itself: 'Where Christ is, there is heaven'.[15] And: 'God is everywhere... when it is said that heaven is God's abode, it is because that place is free from evil'.[16] And there are several quotes involving the 'kingdom of heaven' - it is the soul liberated by faith, eternal life itself, or 'our reward'.[17] This element of 'reward' is also contained in the reminder that whoever looks for heaven will also be given worldly goods.[18] There is also the idea of earth as a heaven. As a rule, Chrysostom holds that 'this life, the things of this earth are just a shadow of the things to come'.[19] But in the interests of exhorting and encouraging his flock, he can deviate from that: 'make a heaven of your house', warmed by harmonious family life.[20] Ultimately, there is the transforming power of salvation itself: 'Thanks to the cross, the earth has become a heaven'.[21]

It is obvious that many of these definitions already imply a sense of ascent, of upward motion. What are the expressed methods of gaining the heavenly level? One of the fullest definitions or descriptions of heaven partly answers this question. It is very different from Chrysostom's attitude towards the question of the cosmos in that it contains a host of images:

> When the heavenly people, the choirs of above celebrate the *basileus* of all the universe...how is it possible to listen? By rising, if possible, to

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12 Daemones non gubernare mundum 1.6-7: PG49-50.254: BIII.428.

13 In kalendas 3: PG47-48.956: BII.530.

14 C II Corinth. 20.3 (II Corinth. 9.15): PG61.540: LF27.237.

15 De coemeterio et de cruce 2: PG 49-50.395: BIV.6.

16 C Psalms 113.6: PG55.313: BIX.411.

17 De paenitentia 7.7: PG49-50.334: BIII.564, Ad Stagirium a daemone vexatum 1.5: PG46-47.436: BI.288, De paenitentia 3.4: PG49-50.299: BIII.504.

18 Ad oppugnatores vitae monasticae 3.21: PG47-48.385: BI.203.

19 C Genesis 35.7: PG53-54.331: BVII.529.

20 In Genesim sermo VII.4: PG53-54.619: BVIII.380.

21 De cruce et latrone II.1: PG49-50.407: BIV.27.

heaven itself, if not in body at least in spirit, if not in presence at least in thought. The body, earthly and heavy, naturally stays down, but the soul finds itself liberated of this necessity, and flies up to the most high and distant regions - and wants to gain the extremities of the world just as circling the sky, nothing hinders it, so light are the wings of the soul given by God. But he gave not only such light wings, he also gave eyes which see with much more sharpness than those of the body. The power of sight of the body...is refracted...and hindered...but the eyes of the soul...always find their way to the heavenly vault ... but the soul is not capable by itself to acquire knowledge of heavenly things, it needs someone to take it by the hand. Let us imitate the conduct of those who desire to see the royal halls. What do they do? They look for someone who has care of the doorkeys, they accost him, speak to him, implore him, make presents of money even, so that he does us this favour. Let us too accost one of those who are seen to guard the heavenly gates, implore him, talk to him, and instead of money, exhibit our intention, our pure wishes. When he has seen this offer, he will take us by the hand and will put before our eyes not only the royal apartments, but the *basileus* himself sitting in the presence of his armies, with his marshals at his side, tens of thousands of angels, thousands of archangels. He will show us all in detail, as much as we can see. Who is that man? Isaiah...Let us penetrate inside all together. Inside, all is great silence, unspeakable mysteries.
C Uzziah 2.1: SC277.86-88

The necessary means for elevation to heaven are all mentioned here. There is the built-in potential of man to gain heaven, which can be tapped by improving one's own disposition, purifying oneself. Then there is the distinction between body and spirit, the cumbersomeness of the one and mobility of the other. Interesting is the difference Chrysostom sees between the winged soul with which one can actually lift one's self, and the 'eyes of the soul', which seemingly are able to behold the heavenly sphere without even the process of rising. The same method is expressed by some shorter references. The eyes of the soul are drawn to the spectacle above by nature.[22] The 'eye of intelligence' views the inhabitants of heaven, while no language suffices to describe the *basileus*.[23]

But the long quote from Uzziah affords yet more food for thought. Having gained the heavenly sphere, it is expressed metaphorically by 'the royal halls', and the passage is continued in a new language using the elements of an earthly palace. One ends up with a detailed description of heaven in royal terms that is hardly matched by earthly royal descriptions. And finally, Chrysostom himself introduces what turns out, in my opinion, to be one of the main roots of the concept of the royal heaven - Isaiah's vision (Isaiah 6.1-3). Chrysostom usually condenses this vision into mere signal words -

[22] C Genesis 28.3: PG53-54.256: BVII.404.
[23] C Genesis 4.5: PG53-54.44:BVII.51.

'the lord sitting upon a throne' - but on the other hand expands the content: he often mentions Cherubim and Seraphim, whereas Isaiah 6.1-3 does not mention Cherubim at all.

So this is the configuration: heaven a palace, the believer a subject (and an inquisitive one), a prophet the doorman and guide, the powers of heaven as the courtly hierarchy. It is really what one has been looking for primarily under the theme of this study, and what one did not find in direct references to earthly rulers. Instead, the description of heaven sounds more convinced, because this is what Chrysostom himself is interested in and what he wants his audience to concentrate on. The crescendo from the doors to the throne, on the other hand, really brings 6th and 10th century descriptions of the imperial court to mind.[24] The *topos* of the doorkeeper has appeared before and seems to be a favourite of Chrysostom: 'Do you see how he [Matthew] slowly leads us right into the halls of heaven?'.[25] These 'halls' lead one to imagine a heavenly palace.[26] Both Isaiah and Matthew are intercessors for the believer yearning for a glimpse of the heavenly. And Chrysostom obviously considers himself a heavenly doorkeeper in his commitment to pastoral activity, leading his flock to heaven. The combination of personal disposition and God-given potential in the ability of rising to heaven is something that Chrysostom explains or mentions frequently. He has a feather lighter than an eagle's, carrying him above the heaven of heaven.[27] Speech, mental attitude, and 'thought' also procure this ascent above heaven.[28]

All these statements dealt with the mind/soul of a person on earth attaining temporarily a spiritual level by meditation or some other means. This is a

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24 *F.C. Corippus – In Laudem Justini Augusti Minoris* , ed. + transl. Averil Cameron (London, 1976), Book II, p.50-53, l.80-185. Liudprandi Antapodosis VI.5. ed. Joseph Becker, *Die Werke Liudprands von Cremona*, Scriptores Rerum Germanicarum, 3rd edition (Hannover-Leipzig, 1915) Antapodosis 1-158, Legatio 175-212.

25 C Matthew 18.6: PG57-58.272AB.

26 An interesting digression on this specific term: C. Fabricius, *Zu den Jugendschriften des Johannes Chrysostomus - Untersuchungen zum Klassizismus des 4. Jahrhunderts*, (Lund, 1962), Thesis, p.124. Fabricius sees the 'halls' in the literature of the late empire as dependent on Plato's Phaedrus. But: 'Die bei Johannes Chrysostomus vorkommend Pluralform scheint...der christlichen Literatur anzugehören. Daß sie bei Libanius steht...braucht dem nicht zu widersprechen.' This is a timely reminder of the importance of the habits and traditions of classicizing language, without even broaching the topic of classical imagery.

27 Statues 11.10(4): PG49-50.125A, and this *topos* of flying up is also found in De compunctione - ad Stelechium 1: PG46-47.411: BI.246.

28 De incomprehensibili dei natura 2: SC28.136: PG48.714B and 4: SC28.242: PG48.734C, C Psalms 112.2: PG55.302: BIX.393.

fundamentally different process from the final ascent of the departing soul from the dead human body to eternal heaven; although the successful outcome of this transportation is also highly dependent on appropriate preparation during life:

> So if you consider all this, and think of earthly society (πολιτείας), you should lead a life worthy of the life in heaven, worthy of the honour shown to you...in complete innocence, as one lives in heaven. Do not believe that you have anything in common with the earth, because you are not yet transported to heaven in your body - your head [Christ] is already enthroned there...
> If an earthly *basileus* were suddenly to turn you from being a poor beggar into being his son, you would not even look any longer at your hut and its poverty, even though the difference would not be that great. Thus also here do not think of what you possessed before you were chosen for far better things. He who calls you is the master of the angels.
> **C Matthew 12.4: PG57-58.206CD**

This same exhortation to a virtuous life looking towards heaven forms the substance of many statements.[29] The importance of reading Scripture, of Scripture becoming a vessel towards heaven appears again: 'Reading the Scriptures offers delights of a paradise, preferable to the first paradise...'.[30] It is not only active doing, and the right decisions that smooth the path to the heavenly level. Chrysostom describes how sadness, misfortunes and how we bear them also earn us the crowns of heaven.[31] In these passages it is not clear whether the elevation takes place during life or after death. Dying is maybe the most natural way for the virtuous soul of gaining the heavenly level. That this is part of the nature of man Chrysostom also emphasizes.[32]

But the actual process of the soul leaving the earthly body invites contrasting descriptions. The soul sometimes fears the parting, dreads the approaching angels.[33] Angels seem to be equally connected with both the ascent to heaven and with heaven itself. One should remember how Chrysostom

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[29] C Matthew 27.2: PG57-58.346B, C Genesis 5.1: PG53-54.50: BVII.59, C Genesis 24.4: PG53-54.211: BVII.331, C Genesis 28.6: PG53-54.259: BVII.410.

[30] In principium Actorum III.1: PG51-52.87: BV.121 [Dating: this chapter is still attributed to Antioch]. Similarly, De Anna 4: PG53-54.658: BVIII.441.

[31] De Lazaro V: PG47-48.1017-1028: BII.630ff.

[32] De Anna I.3: PG53-54.636: BVIII.404.

[33] C Matthew 53.5: PG57-58.532C. This *topos* is traditional, variations on this anguish and the presence of angels at death are found in the Cappadocians. See C. Moreschini, *Grégoire de Nazianze – Discours 32-37*, SC 318 (1985) Discours 34.3, p.203, and J. Mossay, *La Mort et l'Au-Delà dans S. Grégoire de Nazianze*, Université de Louvain - Recueil de Travaux d'Histoire et de Philologie, 4e Série, Fascicule 34 (Louvain, 1966) p.42-43. For Gregory of Nyssa, see 'De Anima et de Resurrectione' (Macrina) I.2: PG46.13, and P. Maraval, *Vie de Sainte Macrine*, SC 178 (1974) 22 - 23, p.215.

repeatedly emphasizes the involvement of monks and especially priests with angels, which was discussed in the chapter on priesthood. The following quote expresses the same idea:

> With the monks, conversation and thoughts are always concerned with eternity, as if they already lived in a different world, as if they were transported to heaven, as if they lived in the beyond, thus they talk about the things up there, about Abraham's bosom, about the crowns of the saints, about the blissful dwelling with Christ...
> **C Matthew 69.4: PG57-58.653D**

The question of monks raises that of other athletes in the faith. Martyrs, saints and their ascent to heaven are well represented in Chrysostom.[34] Their triumph and its description often involve elements of city life and of imperial processions.[35] The palatine atmosphere is upheld in one of the most general tenets Chrysostom holds and voices repeatedly: to die and to go to heaven is like being invited to court to be crowned and no reason for grief.[36]

Most impressive among these scenes of ascent are without doubt those where the soul arrives as if at a gate, and is slowly admitted into a palace. One should perhaps note that this happened to the 'alive' soul, on an outing from its earthly body rather than leaving earth for good. Maybe a heaven visited during a temporary elevation from earth carries more earthly elements than the final, no-return heaven. Probably both nearness and distance are at work subconsciously when Chrysostom conjures up these scenes and prompts him to use colourful imagery, or to paint a more abstract picture respectively. This cannot be precisely reconstructed, but the props and backdrops he uses in his heaven are collated in the next chapter.

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[34] De Macabeis I.3: PG49-50.621f: BIV.357f.

[35] De ss. martyribus 2: PG49-50.710: BIV.490, De ss. martyribus sermo 1: PG49-50.645: BIV.394, In s. Julianum martyrem 3: PG49-50.670-671: BIV.432, De Lazaro II.2: PG47-48.984: BII.575.

[36] For example C I Corinth. 41.4: PG61.360: LF9.591.

10 The Fittings of Heaven

In the following pages, Chrysostom's statements will present a curious mixture of images in trying to describe heaven, and many of these images already appeared in connection with the ascent to heaven. Imperial processions, palace buildings, the city and its population structured into demes all appear in a seemingly inexhaustible variety of combinations. A classification of these descriptions is difficult, and maybe too much clinical neatness is not even advisable. Again, Chrysostom himself illustrates these problems best:

> If the visible parts of heaven are so beautiful, so sweet to behold, what beauty must not the invisible parts, and the heaven of heavens have? As you cannot behold that with the eyes of the body, elevate yourselves in thought, rise beyond heaven, and contemplate the upper heaven with its immeasurable height, with its demes of angels, its ranks of archangels and the other incorporeal powers; then, descending again, return to the images at our disposal and describe to me the apparel that surrounds a *basileus* of this earth, the guards covered in gold, a seat shimmering with precious stones, drawn by a pair of white mules harnessed in gold, the metal fittings with which the chariot is covered, the dragons represented on the silken clothes, and the snakes with golden eyes, the horses covered in gold and even with golden reins. Anyway, when we perceive the *basileus*, we see nothing of these riches any more, he alone fixes our gaze with his purple cloak, his diadem, his throne, his shoulder clasp, his shoes, and the radiance of his face. After having assembled all these images, transport your thoughts again to a superior sphere, and imagine the terrible day of the coming of Christ. You will see neither golden carriages with their team of white mules, nor dragons, nor snakes; but you will see a scene so powerful, so extrordinary, that the heavenly powers themselves are stupefied.
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> **De perfecta caritate 6: PG56.286-287: BX.541-542**[1]

Chrysostom first prepares the minds of his audience for the point he wants to make: he uses 'images at our disposal' to set a scene of a *basileus* surrounded by ceremonial. He then pushes his audience to do without these images, but to translate their pattern and what they expressed onto a spiritual plane. One will find that usually such picturesque passages work with a mixture of imagery without giving the benefit of such instruction. There is also a description using the earthly ceremony of *adventus*, as so often in a heavenly context. Why was man created last?

[1] A very similar description of the ceremonial Christ is emphatically not in need of already appeared on p.140.

> Just as when a *basileus* has to enter a city, the generals and governors and guards and all the slaves precede him, so that they can prepare the palace and all other necessities of service, so that all would be worthy and dignified for the *basileus*. This is what we have here - preceding the intended arrival of the *basileus*, the sun comes, the heaven runs before, light enters, all is created and prepared, and then man is introduced with all honours....
> **In Genesim sermo II.1: PG53-54.588: BVIII.329**[2]

The *topos* of an imperial procession should naturally lead to its starting or finishing point, the palace. But a notion of 'palace' appears quite rarely in Chrysostom's descriptions, while the image of the *basileus* in procession is much more frequent. There is one passage which tries to emphasize, though, that a heavenly palace is a reality, not a help to understanding or an abstract projection:

> If even this apostle [Peter], at the sight of a faint image of future realities, banishes from his soul at that very moment all other thought because of the happiness which that vision produces, what shall we say when these things are even there in reality, when once the palace is opened up, it will be permitted to see the *basileus* in his very person, not any more concealed and in a mirror, but face to face, not any more by faith but with our eyes?
> **Ad Theodorum lapsum 11: SC117.144**

'Palace' may not be a building in heaven, but a translation for the concept of heaven. A fallen woman on earth is socially 'out', how much more impossible to introduce her to the heavenly palace.[3] And the Last Supper is once compared to a celestial banquet.[4] But both procession and palace are unthinkable without their stage, the city. Still in combination with royal accoutrements, the *topos* of the city can be extended to a heavenly state with a population structured in demes. Cloak and diadem and pomp received on earth all evaporate, but the angelic demes 'do not cease to applaud our efforts'.[5] The city and its population also appear in a statement which at first seems an incongruous jumble of images. No earthly prince would suffer a robber or even just one of his subjects to be with him on entering the city.

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[2] In the further course of this passage Chrysostom enters upon the problem of who God is speaking to when saying 'Let us create man' - simply to one of the angels or archangels, as if they were servants? He addresses the Son, but this will be explored in the next chapter.

[3] Contra eos qui subintroductas habent virgines II.6: PG46-47.526: BI.441.

[4] De proditione Judae I.6: PG49-50.382: BIII.640.

[5] De Anna 5: PG53-54.659: BVIII.441-442.

But Christ does just that - robbers and prostitutes entering heaven [here synonymous with Paradise] are an honour.[6]

But then the importance of both palace and city is balanced by a comment on the first letter to Timothy.[7] It starts again with the ascent - 'look up to heaven'. And then the whole emphasis is on the point of how inferior earth's beautiful buildings are compared with the fabric of heaven. So how can 'a palace', something earthly, be a suitable name for something heavenly? But *is* palace seen as something predominantly earthly? Heavenly mansions as such are not denied, they are in this context inhabited by alms-giving Christians. And this is often followed by the statement that heavenly mansions and tabernacles are accessible to the soul at all times, in positive contrast to earthly public buildings keeping to their opening (or rather closing) hours. The elements of public buildings, the existence of 'buildings' in heaven leads back to the element of 'city', which appears again in a string of familiar images:

> For you will see no darkness, no smoke and thunder, but the *basileus* himself how he sits on this throne of unspeakable glory, with the angels and archangels and also with their uncounted legions of the crowds of the saints. That is what it looks like, in the city of God, which harbours the assembly of the firstborn, the souls of the just, the assembly of the angels and the blood of salvation...in this city looms the magnificent and shining sign of victory, the cross, the booty of Christ...the spoils of war of our *basileus*...
> **C Matthew 2.1: PG57-58.23D-24C**

The city is described with its population - the just, the firstborn, the angels. I find the allusion to the true cross particularly interesting - it is reminiscent of structures like columns and statues dominating public squares, especially in connection with the royal spoils mentioned immediately afterwards. However, this occurrence of the cross is very isolated and out of keeping with its role in Chrysostom's work as a whole.[8] The question of the ultimate heavenly city, the heavenly Jerusalem, will be dealt with in a separate chapter.

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[6] De cruce et latrone I.2: PG49-50.401: BIV.16.

[7] C I Timothy 15.4: PG62.585A.

[8] The role of the cross for Chrysostom is painstakingly discussed by P.Stockmeier, *Theologie und Kult des Kreuzes bei Johannes Chrysostomus. Ein Beitrag zum Verständnis des Kreuzes im 4. Jahrhundert.* (Trier, 1966). The passage I quoted does not appear to be mentioned. But an interesting point is that, according to Stockmeier, Chrysostom sees the cross as the principle of cosmic structure.

To look at one particular aspect of this image of both palace and city: there seems to be enough evidence in favour of 'buildings' in heaven. But this is not all there is. Allusion to the existence of the population has already been made and will have to be filled out with statements on its activities, and then there is the general atmosphere of heaven to be considered. The evidence for those points erodes the building programme of above somewhat, because this population moves in a far more abstract space, but on the other hand its activities and terms of existence seem realistic enough. As H. Feldman has pointed out, this image of the *πολιτεία* of heaven is explored most consistently in Chrysostom's sermons 'De Anna'. 'City' as heavenly state there describes a specific form of communal living inspired by Christianity, and Feldman cites specifically the fourth chapter of De Anna 3, where 'a direct comparison is drawn between the civic liturgical system and the 'liturgy' performed by Christians for the heavenly city'.[9] This leads to a most interesting fringe image - how far does an identification of the church with heaven encroach on the court-heaven parallel, does it assume a privileged position, is it at all prominent in Chrysostom's work? There is another statement on liturgy similar to that found in 'De Anna':

> Up above armies of angels go through the liturgy, down here in the churches the humans stand in choirs imitating the very same liturgy...together heavenly beings and earthly ones celebrate...
> **C Uzziah 1.1: SC277.4**

The mechanics of this comparison are the same as in countless court-heaven passages. Even the *στρατία* with their military connotations appear. But the heavenly beings are considered present in church, therefore a togetherness of human and divine is achieved that is missing in the court-heaven parallel. Obviously the spiritual dimension of the assembly and *locus* of the church is here not extended to the palace, the court. But there is a passage containing a triangular metaphor comparing the tombs of martyrs - often used as churches - both with heaven and with an imperial palace dominated by a gold-clad *basileus* with lieutenants and generals at his side in a vision of the Resurrection.[10] And Chrysostom goes on to say how much more beautiful and terrible heaven is than these examples he used. Frequently, the church building itself is compared to a palace and in turn to heaven. Chrysostom describes Catechumens as follows: 'without the court of the *basileus* they

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[9] Feldman, *Christian Reaction*, p.260-61.

[10] C II Corinth. 26.5 (II Corinth. 12.10): PG61.582: LF27.300.

stand, far from the sacred precincts'.[11] There is also evidence for the superiority of the church to other worldly patterns and institutions - and that is in line with the priority of priesthood over rulership discussed before:

> The prototype of the earthly Jerusalem was Agar - and this is clear from the mountain which is thus named - while that of the heavenly was the church. However, he does not limit himself to prototypes, but brings Isaiah as a witness for his statement. For he had said: The higher Jerusalem is our mother, and understood the church by that.
> **C Galatians 4.26: PG61.662D**[12]

The Church is the prototype of the heavenly Jerusalem, which is a traditional concept. The conclusion must be that the Church always existed in God's plan and that from there it was copied onto the heavenly Jerusalem - is then the heavenly Jerusalem in turn the *typos* of the court and palace? It would help to clarify whether the heavenly Jerusalem is the *typos* also for Chrysostom's idea of city. Some illumination may be found in the chapter on Chrysostom and Jerusalem.

Apart from their importance as inhabitants of a heavenly state or city, Chrysostom often paints a vivid picture of the more tangible pursuits of the heavenly beings, somewhat limiting their spiritual acumen. Do angels talk among themselves? he asks. No - they unceasingly glorify God, angels and Seraphim chanting in turn. More importantly, they turn their eyes away from God, sing to the glory coming from God's dwelling. Chrysostom hastens to add that this does not mean that God actually occupies a locality, that it merely corresponds to a human saying 'wherever he may be'.[13] The point of this passage is that Chrysostom takes this behaviour of the heavenly beings as proof that even they, like any other created being, have no knowledge of the real substance of God. This puts heavenly beings more on a par with humans and ultimately makes their behaviour easier to identify with. On the other hand, one should perhaps not forget that Chrysostom's aim in this passage is to make a theological point, and not to give a description. Still, affinities between humans and angels are mentioned also elsewhere:

> That frees us from earth [the process of thanking God], points to heaven and changes us into angels from humans. For also the angelic

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[11] C I Corinth. 2.5 (I Corinth. 1.10-11): PG61.399: LF27.25.

[12] The idea of the Church as a natural mother appeared before, on p.123.

[13] De incomprehensibili dei natura 1: SC28.100-102: PG48.707AB

> choirs thank God for the benefices he showed to us humans, and sing (Luke 2.14). - But what have we to do with angels, who do not live on earth and are not even humans? Very much, for thus we are taught to love our fellow creatures and consider the good they have as our own.
> **C Matthew 25.3: PG57-58.331CD**

So it seems that heavenly beings are closer to humans than to God, and Chrysostom can also be seen pointing to bigger steps in the heavenly hierarchy than in earthly systems - the problem of hierarchy in heaven will be discussed in a separate chapter. This becomes especially obvious in connection with a metaphor that is isolated from *basileus*, palace and city. Music (in this case hymns sung during service) 'entertains the powers above',[14] and also Isaiah is entitled to enjoy this musical heaven,[15] but in both cases heaven really only becomes introduced as a largely inactive audience around the lord of the angels.

Part of this gap between the *basileus* of heaven and his immediate subjects is expressed by the *topos* of 'unapproachable light' forming a boundary, an element that was a staple with Eusebius and is found abundantly in the Cappadocians. Christ is described as dwelling in unapproachable light.[16] In the following passage this light has a greater importance relating to the other elements of heaven:

> What sort of light is that? Not that which is seen here, but another, much better one, that shows us heaven, the angels, archangels, Cherubim, Seraphim, thrones, masterships (*κυριότητας*), rules, authorities, all the armies, the halls, the tents... . You will get where 'pain and suffering is over', where great delight and peace, love, joy and enjoyment, eternal life, most elevated glory, and unspeakable beauty are, the eternal tents, the glory of the *basileus* is beyond all speech and the goods... 'no eye has seen, no ear has heard, and are entered in no man's heart, where the bridegroom of the soul is and the chambers of heaven, where the virgins with burning lamps are and all who wear the wedding gown, and the resources of the lord and the stores of the *basileus*'.
> **C Matthew 54.6: PG57-58.540BC**

The element of light is found in a familiar context, and material fittings of heaven appear again: halls, palaces, tents. After an intermittent description of hell - something which will be discussed separately - Chrysostom repeats part of this imagery and mixes it with more and different elements. Esoteric qualities, like well-being, glory, beauty are combined with metaphorical

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[14] De Lazaro I.1: PG47-48.963: BII.542.

[15] De mutatione nominum I.1: PG51-52.114-115: BV.162.

[16] C I Timothy 18.1: PG62.597-598.

mention of dwellings, chambers and accumulated goods. Among it all can be found the separate metaphor of bridegroom and virgin as a straight quote from the Bible, whose theological implications maybe should not be mixed up with the royal metaphor. Both are based on different earthly prototypes, wedding and court respectively. However, there are instances where the two are merged together, the example of an earthly *basileus* inviting to his son's wedding was discussed in the chapter on the *basileus* and his environment.[17]

The passage as a whole might be discouraging - too many and too different concepts of heaven seem to mingle, and judging by content alone they are apparently exclusive of each other. How much is Chrysostom's conviction, how much is rhapsodizing? I think it is really one of the places where the metaphor and its descriptive imagery is just that - a literary expedient to sharpen the contrast between two possible states of the soul - evil in hell, good in heaven. The difference will be seen by an example where the mingling of concepts is induced by content. Such passages are for example those dealing with the lord and the inhabitants of heaven leaving their abode on judgement day:

> ...at the end of time he will return with the whole glory of the Father, not only with Moses and Elijah, but with the endless army of angels, with archangels and Cherubim, with the endless crowds of up there, and not just a cloud will be around his head, but he will be surrounded by heaven itself. Just as at a public legal court the attendants pull open the curtains so that the judges become visible, so it will be on judgement day - all will see him sitting in state, and all mankind will appear before him...
> **C Matthew 56.4: PG57-58.554D**

Note the choice of simile - fittingly, a legal court is selected. In a similar description there is a giddy rush of the risen souls heavenward on the one hand and of the lord out of heaven on the other, and the trumpets calling the souls add to the confusion.[18] In both passages there seems to be a greater distinction between humans and angels again. But descriptions of the last judgement or the second coming really belong in a different framework, and have nothing - or very little - to do with the descriptions of a pre-judgement

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[17] See p.83. For the development of this metaphor see H.Heyne, *Das Gleichnis von den klugen und törichten Jungfrauen. Eine literarisch-ikonographische Studie zur altchristlichen Zeit* (Leipzig, 1922). Heyne sees it based on the description of wedding scenes in the Old Testament, and on the customs of wedding prescribed in the Talmud (p.13), but separates this basis from its later theological significance (p.18).

[18] C Matthew 76.4: PG57-58.699A.

heaven, heaven as it is in Chrysostom's 'now' - and Chrysostom's different handling of the two seems to bear that out . One must not forget, either, that the biblical source material here is quite apart from 'ordinary' descriptions, it is almost a different kind of deity that is being described, and little of a royal metaphor comes in. This difference is probably strongest in the writings on the Apocalypse itself. But there is a possibility that Chrysostom did not accept the Apocalypse. One has to agree with the observation that apocalyptic imagery appears less frequently than in some of the other authors discussed, notably Athanasius.[19] But to bring the various aspects of heaven and its equipment all together, and to integrate various metaphorical elements that have been discussed in isolation:

> What goes on in this world, you know precisely, be it new or old and past, and you can number the princes under which you served, the umpires, the prize winners, the generals, all things that will not help you. But the rulers of yonder town, who takes first, second and third rank there, or how long somebody is there, or what one had to do or achieve to get there - to think about that does not occur to you even in your dreams. And of the laws that are in force in this city, you do not even want to listen to others when they speak of them, nor would you care for them. So how can you expect to achieve these promised goods, if you do not even pay attention to the message? However, even if we did not do that before, let us do it now. For if God wills it, we will move into a city gleaming with gold, which is even more precious than any gold. Let us examine its foundations, let us look at its gates consisting of sapphires and pearls. The best guide we have is Matthew. He is the gate through which we enter, and it is necessary for us to show great zeal. For if he sees one who does not pay attention, he will chase him from the city. For this is a most royal and magnificent city, not like our cities in which market place and palace are separated - there all is a royal palace.
> So let us open the gates of our mind, and let us be careful, let us prepare to cross the threshold with greatest reverence to adore the *basileus* inside. For easily the first encounter can upset the beholder. Now the gates are still closed to us, but once we see them opened (and that happens by our doubts being scattered), then we will behold a mass of blinding light in there. For this customs officer, guided by the light of spirit, promises to show all to you: where the throne of the *basileus* is and which armies attend him; where the angels are and where the archangels; where in this city the place is for the newcomers and where the way that leads there; which rank those have who first obtained citizenship there, and which those who arrived later, and those yet after these. Furthermore: how many factions there are among the citizens, how many sit in the council, and how many ranks of dignitaries there are.
> So let us enter, not with noise and din, but in mystical silence. For if even in the theatre they read an imperial edict only in complete silence, how much more fitting is it in this city for all to be in silence and order and stand by attentively in the right spiritual disposition! Not an earthly

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[19] S.Verosta, *Johannes Chrysostomus - Staatsphilosoph und Geschichtstheologe* (Graz, 1960) p.185: '...die Geheime Offenbarung des Johannes gehört nicht zum neutestamentlichen Kanon des Chrysostomus'.

> *basileus'* missive shall be read, but that of the lord of the angels. If we bring our spirit into this disposition, then we will, under the effective workings of the Holy Spirit, advance to the steps of the royal throne and partake of all the goodness, by the mercy and love of our Lord Jesus Christ...
> **C Matthew 1.8: PG57-58.23AB-24AB**

Does Chrysostom voice his convictions here? It seems so. Heaven here is a strongly structured entity. The city, the throne may all be metaphorical illustrations, but their importance lies in their function of expressing spiritual entities. There would be no need to introduce these images if there was no need to explain something with them. Chrysostom may not himself believe in actual gates or a city, but what he uses them for is nevertheless to explain a reality he does believe in, a certain relationship of degrees of good and evil and degrees of humanity and divinity. It may be a different matter with the *inhabitants* of heaven. Those are souls and spirits. Because the soul/mind is the origin of human actions, it presumably can pursue the same actions and functions without a body. It is probably to counter all these problems of projection and understanding that Chrysostom introduces the customs officer, the guide, the doorman - always a figure of authority, but also of human size: Matthew, Isaiah, and by inference, he himself. This figure is intended to help the believer switch levels and images much as Virgil guides Dante, and more than anything this topos emphasizes Chrysostom's concern for the spiritual well-being of his flock.

Chrysostom believes in the existence and the strength of this heavenly structure and hierarchy and he uses certain images connected with earthly rule to encourage such belief in his flock. But his audience may look to these images as being Chrysostom's idea of heaven without looking further to the spiritual dimensions expressed by them. This is highly possible especially as he is so consistent in using the same image for the same thing - the customs officer, the gate, the city, the people all appear also elsewhere. And it is also extremely difficult to find Chrysostom in Antiochene texts describing heaven in non-metaphorical terms, in terms of abstract spirituality. In the previous chapter, it was seen how he even avoids describing the cosmos in naturalistic terms, and more on the metaphorical description of the cosmos will be found in the subsequent appendix.[20] Seeing, therefore, how important and 'real' this heavenly structure appears to be to Chrysostom, it seems warranted to look at just the question of hierarchy in heaven by itself.

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[20] See p.142-143. Different, more abstract terms of describing heaven will be found in texts from Constantinople, see Chapter 17.

Appendix: The Cosmological Heaven, and Hell

Why are the features of cosmological heaven not automatically an integral part of the discussion of the court-heaven metaphor? Because they do not figure in this metaphor itself. One has to accept that two levels of reality, or two parallel possibilities of reality, are involved, the physical and the spiritual. Neither excludes the other totally. In the context of this research, it is to passages combining both physical and spiritual elements that one might look with special interest. To start with, there is the biblical range of images. Heaven is God's throne, earth is the footstool for his feet, Jerusalem is the city of the great *basileus*.[21] It is an attempt to fit the concept of God almost physically into the concept of heaven. Fittingly, variations of this attempt appear in Chrysostom's comments on the incomprehensibility of God: he cites Isaiah 40.22, describing how God uses heaven as a platform, and as a tent above earth.[22] This is not the most exotic description. More outlandish elements appear, the various systems seem incompatible - one possible reason being that Chrysostom draws almost entirely on biblical quotes here:[23]

> We have also compared other powers, the Cherubim, and showed how above them is a firmament, a rock of crystal, the shape of a throne and the appearance of a man, and shining metal, and fire, and a rainbow, and how of all this the prophet says: 'This will be what the glory of the God looks like'.
> **De incomprehensibili dei natura 4: SC28.212: PG48.729A**

Chrysostom seems at a loss how to work out for himself the relationship between the nature of God and the properties of the cosmos. He probably does not himself see the necessity of such a relationship and only embarks on pictorial description because that seemed pedagogically helpful in the course of his argument. His own conception is perhaps embodied in his recurring exclamations about the sheer beauty of the sky, revealing the powers of God.[24]

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[21] C Matthew 17.5: PG57-58.260CD, taking up from Matthew 5.34-35.

[22] De incomprehensibili dei natura 2: SC28.132: PG48.713BC.

[23] The images used appear in Ezekiel 1.26 and 10.2, involving the Cherubim as palace staff. The 'rock of crystal' is a 'sapphire stone' in the King James translation.

[24] Some had been quoted in the last chapter, another instance is found in De incomprehensibili dei natura 2: SC28.130: PG48.713AB.

However, in other writings too Chrysostom uses a combination of God's nature and task and cosmic realities, and in his commentary on St. John one sees him picking up the elements used in 'De incomprehensibili dei natura'. Heaven is compared to a stage, with the world as theatre and angels and angelic humans as audience.[25] But the question is whether in all these statements Chrysostom consciously does include the physical cosmos, and whether it is not still the spiritual heaven he describes in these terms which another reader associates with cosmic realities. Is this crystal heaven something he does not believe in, or is his notion of cosmic and spiritual heaven really so close, almost identical? Maybe a helpful contribution will come from an examination of Chrysostom's view of 'hell'. If he believes in a physically defined hell, it is likely that the descriptions we have read of cosmic heaven are both spiritual and physical reality for him as well.

> Where are now the people who despite such a fine distinction by God do not want to admit that there is a hell? (672D)
> But where, at which point of cosmos will be hell? - What concern of yours is that? In my opinion it is outside this entire world. For just as the prisons and penal mines of the *basileis* are far away, so also hell will be outside this earth.
> **C Romans 32.4: PG60.672D, 673D-674A**

So hell exists, which contrasts with some tentative statements by Gregory of Nyssa, for example, who defined hell merely as the distance from God. An assurance of the existence of hell is also given in the commentary on Matthew.[26] The physical qualities of hell are also referred to. In the commentary on John Chrysostom asserts that the accounts of hell fire and endless punishment are to be believed.[27] Chrysostom takes up the term of 'Hades' from a biblical text (Job) without qualification,[28] without prompting he rather seems to use the term 'jehenna' (*γέεννα*) himself.[29] And in general, the devil is very much limited, created and also used as a divine instrument in his demonology. Demons aim to chase man from paradise and the kingdom of heaven, and Chrysostom also states that 'if the devil is a murderer, so are all the demons' in the same text.[30] But the devil appears also in a very different disguise, linked with pagan religion. Chrysostom

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[25] C John 1.2: PG59.25D-26A.

[26] C Matthew 46.4: PG57-58.480B.

[27] C John 38.1: PG59.211C.

[28] C Job 14.5: SC346.361.

[29] De perfecta caritate 4 : PG56.284: BX.537; De baptismo Christi 1: PG49-50.364: BIII.612.

[30] Adversus Judaeos I.7: PG47-48.854: BII.370 and Adversus Judaeos VIII.8: PG47-48.940: BII.509.

describes how even the dead St. Babylas defeats an emperor - Julian - and the demon whose instrument this emperor was, which shows that he considers Apollo not as an empty projection, but as one shape of the devil.[31] He devotes an entire homily to the cause of weakening the Manichaean case, to minimizing the influence of the devil, and he makes this conviction clear in its introduction.[32] The devil can kill a human being, but cannot make it evil.[33] Even if the devil interferes with human welfare, Chrysostom considers this to be under divine supervision: 'So you see, God permits that the angels of Satan oppress his servants'.[34]

But there is also some indication that Chrysostom envisages some hellish structure symmetrical to the hierarchy of heaven. He mentions the 'angels of satan' and the 'army of the Devil'.[35] In this context of martyrdom the 'army' is obviously a response to the militaristic metaphors used for the 'soldiers' of Christ. The 'tyranny of the Devil' appears,[36] and Chrysostom also quotes Matthew 25.41, God speaking on the final day: 'Be far from me, evildoers, go to the eternal fire with the devil and his angels', which evokes a negatively angelic entourage around the devil.[37]

These were statements and references that were found scattered throughout Chrysostom's works. Lengthy descriptions and definitions of the devil and his functions can of course be found in the appropriate chapters of Chrysostom's commentary on Job. The authenticity of this commentary is not established beyond doubt.[38] The content itself speaks both for and against Chrysostom's authorship. Certain views on condescension, the functions of angels and the limited power of the devil tie in with authentic statements:

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31 De s. Babyla contra Julianum et gentiles 16: PG49-50.558: BIV.257.

32 Daemones non gubernare mundum I.: PG49-50.241ff: BIII.412ff.

33 C Job II.5: SC346.165.

34 In s. Eustathium Antiochenum 4: PG49-50.603: BIV.329.

35 In s. Eustathium Antiochenum 3: PG49-50.603: BIV.329 and In s. Barlaam martyrem 4: PG49-50.682: BIV.449.

36 C Genesis 30.1: PG53-54.274: BVII.433.

37 C Genesis 50.2: PG53-54.456-459: BVIII.110.

38 One point against it is its supposed 'roughness' - but one should bear in mind that for other texts this has proved authenticity against some 'smoother' versions - the stenographed, breathless version ties in more realistically with the conditions of Chrysostom's preaching. F.T. Gignac, "The Text of Acts in Chrysostom's Homilies", *Traditio* 26, 1970, 308-314, p.314. L. Dieu, "Le Commentaire de Saint Jean Chrysostome sur Job", *Revue d'Histoire Ecclésiatique* 13 (1912) 640-658, p.658 attributes it definitely to Chrysostom. See also p.52-53.

> [The figure of the devil in Scripture] is an image and example. The anthropomorphic character of Scripture is frequent....Also, the devil has no longer the right to dwell amongst the angels.....The earth is filled with both demons and angels, and both are under the power of God, and the angels present themselves before God whence they receive their orders, and the devil can do nothing but what pleases him [God], if he has not received permission from above....The devil has nothing to say...he too is dependent on God.
> **C Job I.8: SC346.105**

But there are some details on a very rigid delegation of functions to the angels that are not found in Chrysostom's descriptions of heaven. The angels are servants of God, the devil no longer, and angels and demons are mixed just like good and evil men in the average society. Angels can have various functions - they live in children (Matthew 18.10), free apostles (Acts 12.15) and are guardian angels (Genesis 48.16). And he continues:

> The angels are also concerned with the guard over the nations, for, as Scripture says: 'He fixed the frontiers of the nations according to the number of his angels' (Deuteronomy 32.8). In Daniel, we also find these words: 'Michael is our chief', (Daniel 10.21). And in many places of the Old Testament one sees that the angels do not just come on God's behalf to put affairs in order, but that they are charged in some way with a mission of responsibility ... This is why we say in our prayers : 'Let us pray to the angel of peace', for there is also an angel of battle and fighting, by which I mean the devil...
> The term 'angel', in fact, is ambiguous. And if one does not add: of God, or: of the Devil, the meaning is not at all clear. This is why no part of Scripture is content with saying: 'an angel', but always states precisely that it is an angel of the Lord involved; which signifies that the government of the earth rests in their hands....You see that heaven is inaccessible to the demon, because he is evil.
> **C Job I.9: SC346.109-113**

In addition to providing us with Chrysostom's views on angels, this strong hint about the reliability of Scripture contained in this passage again speaks for Chrysostom as author, and the same goes for the directness of speech in another passage:

> 'On the same day, the angels of God came to stand around the Lord, and the devil came into their midst to confront the Lord...' Why? He [the devil] to tempt Job, they to administer our affairs. Why is he questioned again among the angels? Most definitively because he has said also before them: 'He will not praise you to your face'...
> **C Job II.1: SC346.157**

The devil's mobility within the universe is not described anywhere else but in that commentary. In interpreting the conversations between God and the devil Chrysostom says that the devil points out specifically that he has traversed

also the inhabited world, not just spheres and deserts [39]. In this constant circulation everywhere, the devil has a counterpart in the angels, Chrysostom states quoting Zechariah. It is providence that the devil is always in orbit - it makes us more vigilant.[40]

But this motif is pressed upon Chrysostom by his source, the biblical text - and this phenomenon of him simply reacting to an image in an isolated case has been observed before, for example in connection with 'cosmos'. There remains the personification of both God and the devil throughout the commentary. Job is a bet between the two of them, the whole character of the book of Job promoting that by its drama-like construction.[41]

So hell is real, cosmic heaven is real, and only the description of the interior of heaven stands for a spiritual reality? But maybe hell is a mirror image of the arrangements of heaven? There is one reference in Chrysostom to the choirs of devils.[42] And ranks of stately moving angels were compared with dancing demons. But that in itself may be considered too flimsy as evidence to support the claim that Chrysostom sees hell and heaven as a symmetry. A clearer reference to hierarchy, however, can be found: '...it is not just in hell, but also in the kingdom that there are numerous differences. "There are", he says, "many around my father"'.[43] A hellish hierarchy?

This chapter has shown that the premises, boundaries, locations of spiritual realms beyond human penetration produce confusing and conflicting images when Chrysostom describes them. The *basileus* weaves through most of these descriptions, the city appeared, some reference to ceremonial was made, the palace put in a fleeting appearance. But there is more to heaven, and that is its internal hierarchy, a concept which emerged in the paragraph above and which in itself presents an affinity to earthly orders, at a stretch even to an earthly court.

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39 C Job I.10: SC346.115.

40 Zechariah 1.10-11, C Job II.2: SC346.157-8. Zechariah 12, by the way, is quoted very frequently in C Job. The activities of the devil were destined to proliferate in later Byzantine thought. R.P.H. Greenfield, *Traditions of Belief in Late Byzantine Demonology* (Amsterdam, 1988) charts this process. He mentions many of Chrysostom's remarks about the devil that have been discussed here, and a few more, throughout his study: pp. 10, 38-40, 60, 62-64 concentrate on the definition of the devil and his activities, pp. 105, 109, 113, 117 on the presence of the devil in seemingly harmless daily activities and situations.

41 C Job I.11: SC346.125.

42 C Matthew 37.7: PG57-58.428BC.

43 Ad Theodorum lapsum 21: SC117.214.

11 Hierarchy in Heaven

The observations made during the last chapter presumed that Chrysostom at least accepts the heavenly infrastructure contained in his descriptions as a reality, although maybe not in as colourful a form as he presents it to his audience. Therefore, this chapter starts with a closer look at this infrastructure and its levels. Hierarchical order of some kind appears almost everywhere in Scripture. Chrysostom accepts hierarchy, as has already been seen by his views on government and on earthly rule in general. Outside political hierarchies, a sense of hierarchy is often expressed by him using the term 'difference', without much subsequent discussion. That hierarchy on earth can be extended into spiritual spheres seems beyond question for him, and a link with this spiritual level is for example contained in the hierarchy he describes amongst Christ's disciples - he had seventy, which held but second rank, not enjoying the honours and mysterious instructions of the chosen twelve. And in the next chapter of this homily Chrysostom draws attention to the privilege Judas could enjoy by being in this selected circle.[1] An effortless move through the levels of value from the mundane to the heavenly is also made in the following *Steigerung*:

> ...decorate not your shop, but your soul, not the agora, but your intelligence, so that the angels admire you, that the archangels welcome created man, and that the Master of Angels heaps his gifts on you.
> **In kalendas 1: PG47-48.954: BII.527**

Chrysostom lives with hierarchy also in his own environment. Bishop Flavianus happens to be away, Chrysostom preaches, and how aware he is of the absence of the tip of the local ecclesiastical pyramid is expressed by the metaphor with which he opens his sermon: '...every choir needs a leader...'.[2] So if Chrysostom thinks that strongly in terms of hierarchy, one should expect ranks, levels, tiers also in his references to heaven and its population.

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[1] De proditione Judae I.3: PG49-50.376-377: BIII.631.

[2] In kalendas 1: PG47-48.953: BII.525.

The difficulty underlying all of Chrysostom's statements on heavenly beings lies in the fact that Scripture incorporates widely differing traditions of angelology and heavenly hierarchy, and that Chrysostom usually follows these traditions as they present themselves in his discussion of Scripture. Unlike Clement of Alexandria before him and Dionysius the Areopagite later on, he is not interested in integrating these varying notions into one coherent system.[3] Therefore one cannot submit Chrysostom's statements on heavenly beings to just one discussion leading to just one conclusion. One has to identify, if possible, on which scriptural concept each of his statements is based, classify them accordingly, and look at the resulting groups in turn. This identification does not always reflect the title or general theme of the text the statement is taken from - *e.g.* in the context of Genesis, Chrysostom can be found to be talking about St. Paul, and describing heaven in Pauline terms. Decisions about identification and classification must therefore be made on the basis of what is known about the angelology of different parts of Scripture. Still, 'classification' is rarely unequivocal - Chrysostom often mixes elements of Old and New Testament angelology, or even uses the one to explain the other. Therefore, what follows is a loose grouping of his statements involving angelology into Old Testament, New Testament, and Pauline contexts. However, there are some instances where a scriptural source cannot be identified, and Chrysostom argues on his own.

The Old Testament only gradually absorbed angelic beings into its concept of heaven. These Old Testament angels still lack their final definition as positive spiritual powers of God, and there are difficulties in integrating these arrivals from other traditions with Judaic beliefs, and then in interpreting them correctly from the stand-point of the Christian. Chrysostom has to explain that the phrase 'the sons of God' (Psalm 29.1; 89.7) refers to humans, never to angels. This definition is a safeguard especially against the idea that angels and female humans unite, in which sense Genesis 6.2 could be misinterpreted. Chrysostom continues his explanations: angels and man belong to different ages of creation. Angels are invisible even to saints, how can they then have any physical contact with women.[4] Angels are more beautiful than celestial

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[3] On Clement of Alexandria: W. Carr, *Angels and Principalities. The background, meaning and development of the Pauline phrase 'hai archai kai hai exousiai'* (Cambridge, 1981), p.156-157.

[4] C Genesis 22.2: PG53-54.187-188: BVII.293-294.

bodies, the sun is not as resplendent as an archangel.[5] Chrysostom again attributes to God's condescension this introduction to the Word of God by the description of natural phenomena, as if the concept of heavenly beings is too much to comprehend for the believer.

Another element of Old Testament angelology is the role of angels as agents of God, also mirrored by Chrysostom. In his commentaries he describes these agent angels as historical figures. The two angels dispatched to Sodom are historical reality,[6] just as it is a historical fact that God sends an angel bringing death to David's people.[7] Maybe it is because of such practical functions that the spiritual perfection of angels is also qualified in an Old Testament context:

> And it is amongst those of his house that he [God] passes judgement: 'If he does not believe in his children, and thinks of a mistake of his angels...' (Job 4.18). In my opinion, he speaks of the powers above. What does one have to say of humans, if even the angels are not irreproachable?...It seems to me that their nature is capable of contrary dispositions. What means 'he has thought of some mistake'? He has not tolerated, he says, that their nature supports perfection....
> **C Job IV.16: SC346.237**

In this passage one should also note the idea of God's 'household', reminiscent of archaic *basileis*. However, another element of Old Testament angelology can be traced to Zoroastrian influence during the Babylonian exile: the Cherubim and Seraphim. They are not angels in the sense of humanoid spiritual beings, strictly speaking, but are accepted as angelic beings also by the New Testament. Chrysostom tries to explain:

> What are Seraphim? Incorporeal powers of the peoples above, of whom just the name makes one see virtue and happiness. In Hebrew 'Seraphim' means in fact 'flaming mouths'.
> **C Isaiah 6.2: SC304.262**

How does this fit with the established definition of Cherubim and Seraphim? Although that is their usual fate - maybe owing to a certain homonymity - they should not be classed together. Cherubim have both human and birdlike properties, they appear as bearers of God's throne in the Psalms. Seraphim, on the other hand, are the guardians of the

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[5] In Genesim sermo I.2: PG53-54.582: BVIII.320.

[6] C Genesis 43.4: PG53-54.389-90: BVIII.19-37.

[7] De cruce et latrone I.5: PG49-50.406: BIV.25.

threshold of God's sanctuary in Isaiah's vision (Isaiah 6.1). They have six wings, hands and feet, are taller than God enthroned whom they flank. Chrysostom often cites the Seraphim's 'Holy, holy, holy the Lord of hosts, all earth is filled with his glory...' from Isaiah 6.3.[8] And Seraphim and Cherubim do not blaspheme, their mouth exists only to praise and glorify God.[9] Chrysostom's separate treatment of Seraphim here, limited to a straight translation, seems to indicate an awareness of such differences - which one could expect, considering his interest in Isaiah. Elsewhere, though, Seraphim and Cherubim are simply 'angels': intermingled with a description of the exalted function of the Cherubim serving God as seat (Psalms 17.11, Daniel 3.55), Chrysostom reminds us too that 'if you want, you need not be different from angels'.[10] The reason is implied - man can attain this nature by his own decision and conduct, and this characteristic reflects the role of man in the New Testament.

In another passage the liturgical, ritual glorification of God by the Cherubim and Seraphim is compared directly with the earthly *basileus* in his environment, recalling scenes like those found on the base of the obelisk of Theodosius:

> The office of the choirs of Cherubim and Seraphim is to celebrate eternally the work of God...Those celebrating the deeds of the *basileis* on earth speak of their power, their victories, their triumphs. They enumerate the subjugated nations...it is a similar hymn David directs to God.....
> Enemies have become heirs, men have become angels...what do I say, angels? God became man, man became God, Heaven has raised to there human and terrestrial nature, earth has been united with him who is seated above the Cherubim, in the midst of cohorts of angels...
> **C Psalms 8.1: PG55.106-107: BIX.47-48**

The same projection backwards of the New Testament onto the Old when man and angels are involved can be found elsewhere. When God says 'Let us make man', Chrysostom points out that he does not say that to the angels or archangels. For angels are not part of the council, they are just executing servants, and he cites Isaiah 6.2 on that. God makes this

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[8] Adversus Judaeos I.1: PG47-48.843: BII.352. The Cherubim appear with similar functions in Ezekiel 10.2, but minus the adulation.

[9] C Ephesians 14.4: PG62.104D.

[10] De ss. martyribus sermo 1: PG49-50.645: BIV.394.

remark to Christ.[11] This is also expressed by a lengthy statement where the community of angelic beings, described in the terms of an earthly court, becomes the backdrop to the relation between God and Christ:

> The angels stand around God, but do not participate with his creative activity, the archangels execute his commands, but do not have a say in his plans. Listen to what Isaiah says concerning the Seraphim, powers that are higher than archangels: 'I have seen the Lord seated on his sublime throne, and the Seraphim are around him. Each of them has six wings and hides his face with two of them'. So they cover up their eyes, because they cannot bear the shining rays radiating from the throne. What do you say? What? The Seraphim remain full of respect and admiration before God, although they see his condescension, and the angels share his counsel, deliberate with him? But that defeats reason. So to whom does he say 'Let us make man'? To the son.
> **In Genesim sermo II.2: PG53-54.588-589: BVIII.330**

However, Chrysostom can also be found to remain within the confines of the Old Testament:

> Listen, then, to what Scripture has to say about that little interval separating the angels from human nature... 'You are a little beneath the angels' (Psalms 8.5-6). And thus, even if the gap is small, just as it exists we do not perfectly know angels and even with long speculations it is not possible for us to penetrate it.
> **De incomprehensibili dei natura 5: SC28.272: PG48.740C**

And man is a little lower than angels merely in outer circumstances and because of his ability and proneness to sin also in Chrysostom's commentary on Psalms.[12] Chrysostom's reminder of the limits of our penetration forms a fitting end to this part of the discussion of angels, but it has clearly emerged that the angelology of the Old invariably becomes re-defined by Chrysostom to accommodate the enhanced role of man in the New Testament, making the reconstruction of any rigid hierarchy impossible.

As one moves into the context of the New Testament, Chrysostom only sometimes refers to angelic functions that are based on the Old Testament, although the New Testament also knows the 'agent angels' - they are prominent in the Gospels and Acts, cast as a direct spiritual extension from God to help the apostles - *e.g.* in Acts 12.7-10 - and as

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[11] C Genesis 8.2-3: PG53-54.71-72: BVII.98.

[12] C Psalms 8.7: PG55.116-118: BIX.65-67.

guardian angels (Matthew 18.10). In Chrysostom, angels appear to comfort the disciples after Christ had ascended. And angels have police duties: 'Angels watch our deeds, but God even more so'.[13] Chrysostom also mentions the liturgical functions of heavenly beings, creating a crescendo through their ranks, but this is rather unusual and the following 'prime example' of this characteristic is from a text of doubtful authenticity:

> *Ἄγγελοι ᾄδουσιν, ἀρχάγγελοι μέλπουσιν, ὑμνεῖ τὰ Χερουβίμ, δοξολογεῖ τὰ Σεραφίμ...*
> **In natalem Christi diem 1: PG56.385: BXI.114**[14]

Cherubim and Seraphim reappear here at the juncture of Old and New Law, at Christ's birth, and indeed they will be present, simply as part of the angelic population without emphasis on their special characteristics, in many quotes referring to the New Testament.

Once Chrysostom, commenting on Paul, feels the need to explain how angels are described, exactly as he did in an Old Testament context:

> 'To him every knee shall bow, of things in heaven, and things on earth, and things under the earth' (Philippians 2.10) : he does not say these things as if he invested angels with knees and bones, far from it, but it is their intense adoration, which he intends to shadow out by the fashion amongst us: so, also here he calls it a tongue, not meaning an instrument of flesh, but intending to shadow out their converse with each other by the manner which is known amongst us.
> **C I Corinth. 31.6-7 (I Corinth. 13.2): PG61.268 (32.3): LF9.442**

However, the most important factor in connection with the New Testament is the changed relation of man to heaven, its population and its hierarchy. In an Old Testament context, man is as far from God as heaven is from earth.[15] In the New Testament, there also is an obvious hierarchical step from man to heaven, but:

> A mature and far-travelled man can describe to us the distances, situation and view of cities, harbours and markets in highest detail, but we do not even know how far we are removed from the city of God - maybe we would work to reduce the distance if we knew

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[13] C I Corinth. 12.3: PG61.100: BXVI.470.

[14] Translation: 'The angels adore, the archangels revere, the Cherubim sing, the Seraphim glorify...'

[15] C Job XI.6: SC346.331.

> it. For the distance between that city and ourselves is not only as great as that between heaven and earth, but even greater if we do not care for her. But if we are fired by zeal, we will arrive at her gates very shortly. For those distances are not measured with geographic means, but by intention and way of life.
> **C Matthew 1.7: PG57-58.22D**

The distance between earth and heaven does not seem fixed, but is dependent on the exertions of the individual human being. However - there is a minimum to that distance - heaven is at least above every princely dignity and 'above any name that is called', and above the Church.[16] But in addition to heaven's distance from earth, there seems to be a third step, a third level beyond heaven:

> For God is high above the powers of the height, above all rule and authority and power. Whatever exists in heaven, he is higher than everything.
> **C Ephesians 3.2: PG62.25C**

The same applies to the Son - Christ rises above the heaven of heavens to the throne at the right hand of the Father.[17] Another passage makes this clear - God's own properties, in this instance his love, rise not only beyond princely power, but also beyond all that is heavenly.[18] Heaven is also above paradise: the environment where man will dwell amongst angels is superior to the paradise from which he was driven. This circumstance Chrysostom interprets also as God showing the devil that his tricks avail nothing - he may have succeeded in getting man driven from paradise, but what does it matter as man has heaven to go to?[19] The step from earth to heaven is also described within the context of distances in the universe. The distance between earth and hell is immense, as is that between earth and heaven. And it is far from there to higher heaven, and again to the heavenly beings and God's throne - but there is the climax: 'it is at such height that human nature is set', which expresses the message of the New Testament, the purpose of incarnation and passion.[20] Man is admitted to heaven and becomes part of its population: 'God on earth, man in heaven! All order turned around...man united with ...the...heavenly powers'.[21]

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16 C Ephesians 3.1: PG62.24A.

17 C I Corinth. 34.2 (I Corinth. 13.12): PG61.288: LF9.474.

18 C Romans 16.5: PG60.546B.

19 Adversus Judaeos VIII.2: PG47-48.929: BII.491-492.

20 In ascensionem 3: PG49-50.446: BIV.90.

21 C Matthew 1.2: PG57-58.15D-16A.

Once present in heaven, man becomes integrated with its population. Firstly, good has to be separated from evil at resurrection. The two orders of beings, of the superior and of the inferior world, visible and invisible - will form one single choir to celebrate the *basileus* of the universe. All the different heavenly beings are there, only sinners are excluded.[22] In greater detail:

> And having made two ranks, of the righteous, and of sinners, these same two he subdivides again into many parts, signifying that neither righteous nor sinners shall obtain the same, neither righteous men, all of them, alike with other righteous, nor sinners with other sinners....For as in the earthly bodies there is a difference, so also in the heavenly; and that difference is no ordinary one, but reaching even to the uttermost: there being not only a difference between sun and moon, and between moon and stars, but also between stars and stars. For what though they be all in the heaven? Yet some have a larger, others a less share of glory. Observe now: what do we learn from hence? That although they be all in God's kingdom, all shall not enjoy the same reward, and though all sinners be in hell, all shall not endure the same punishment.
> **C I Corinth. 41.3 (I Corinth.15.41): PG61.357-358: LF9.587-588**

This statement makes the point that there are various groups occupying different levels according to their merit. And Chrysostom moves on from there. Within these groups or classes there are further distinctions - even the just are not all equal and on the same plane, comparable to celestial bodies each in their very own place.[23] And the hierarchy amongst Christ's disciples as mentioned above is taken as an example: the honour in the kingdom will not be equal - just as there were three prominent among the other disciples, and even among those there is a difference. 'For with God there exists a very fine distinction going to the smallest detail'.[24] As to how real Chrysostom sees the differences in the heavenly sphere, this is illustrated by the fact that he considers heaven and hell as symmetrical in this respect, in both levels distinctions are made.[25] But another passage responding to Ephesians really wants to advocate that hierarchical distinctions are not pronounced once man attains heaven:

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[22] Sermo cum presbyter fuit ordinatus 1-2: PG47-48.695: BII.120.

[23] De Lazaro VI.9: PG47-48.1040-1041: BII.666.

[24] C Romans 32.4: PG60.672C.

[25] Ad Theodorum lapsum 21: SC117.214.

> Since you are equal in the spiritual things, why do you raise yourselves? Because this one and that is rich, that one and this powerful?...For tell me: if the emperor were to take ten people, were to dress them all in purple and put them all on the throne and give them the same rank, would one of those boast towards the other with greater riches and better position? And I have not yet said all. For the distance in heaven is less great than down here.
> **C Ephesians 11.1: PG62.80C**

And the closeness between angels and humans whose souls graduated to heaven by the purity of their life is often expressed as 'fellow citizenship':

> What excuse therefore exists for us, we who are citizens of the heavens, and in the ranks of the Cherubim, the companions of the angels, if in this respect [leading a virtuous life] we are even worse than the barbarians?
> **C Matthew 37.7: PG57-58.428A**

This potential to be on a footing of equality with angelic beings appears again later in that cycle.[26] But it does not always exist. Discussing God's dispensation and the revelation of Christ to man, Chrysostom states that man is better than angels and archangels.[27] Does 'humans are better' necessarily also mean 'human souls are higher in heavenly hierarchy'? I think one would be wise not to link those two points. If one does, Chrysostom's evidence invariably contradicts itself. For he also states that 'beholding the face of the father who is in heaven' (Matthew 18.10) merely wants to signify the greater unity of elect angels with God and their greater honour - 'greater' either than that of other angels or that of humans.[28] And again, the sources should be considered. The eclipse of the angels by man only mirrors the new significance of the individual human that is developed with the coming of Christ. It becomes clear that while angels have different capabilities and live in a more exalted place, nearer to God, it is man who has the greater potential for a godly life, simply because he must exert himself for it, it is not granted by default - only the potential for it.

The final definition of the relationship between angels and humans is connected with human nature being enthroned:

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[26] C Matthew 45.3: PG57-58.474D-475A.

[27] C Ephesians 3.3: PG62.26D.

[28] C Matthew 59.4: PG57-58.579.

> Today the angels received what they have desired for long, today the archangels have seen what they have been burning to see for many ages - human nature seated in splendour on a royal throne, and shining with immortal glory and beauty...although this honour raises our nature far above them, they allow themselves only to rejoice about the goodness we have been accorded, for when God punishes us, they suffer on our account, and the Cherubim themselves, charged with guarding paradise, take pity on our misery...like a slave who, following his masters orders, putting a comrade into irons and guarding him, dislikes this necessity out of sympathy for his comrade...
> **In ascensionem 4: PG49-50.448: BIV.92**

At the end of this chapter of 'In ascensionem' the angels descend because they are joyfully impatient to see human nature rise:

> The angels descend, impatient to see that strange spectacle, a man appearing in heaven. That is why we see angels everywhere when Christ is born, when he rises from the dead, when he ascends to heaven.
> **In ascensionem 4-5: PG49-50.449-450: BIV.94-97**

There is an even more colourful scene which Chrysostom paints in connection with Resurrection. The angels dance with happiness, the archangels rejoice, and the Cherubim and Seraphim are not ashamed to celebrate with their human brothers. Even the Master himself is glad to join in.[29] And the ideal is that the differences between heaven and earth, between man and angels are eliminated:

> And in an instant a host of angels [i.e.men] populates the earth, not celestial angels, but angels who in a human body display the virtue of the incorporeal powers themselves. The angels do not descend from heaven to earth - what is much more amazing, the inhabitants of this earth raise themselves to the virtue of angels...
> **De sancta pentecoste I.2: PG49-50.455: BIV.103**

The presence of spiritual beings in heaven and their order attains a new dimension with the letters of St. Paul. Their angelology differs in that on the one hand the emphasis on man's superiority over angelic beings is even greater, while on the other hand the ranks of the heavenly beings are augmented by certain new arrivals - both are illustrated by Colossians 1.15-20. When commenting on Paul, Chrysostom follows these characteristics very closely. Angels are different from humans, and dwell in a different and superior habitat, but are not necessarily superior themselves. Are there explanations for this appearance of equality? God

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[29] Adversus ebriosos et de resurrectione 3: PG49-50.436: BIV.74.

comes with angels in human form out of condescension.[30] There is another basic link between humans and angels - the transmutation of the human soul to angelic nature. If a human becomes angelic in his virtue, he is more superior to fellow humans than a created angel.[31] It is above all humility that turns the apostles into angels.[32] The process is described also in Chrysostom's commentary on Romans: the just man has become an angel, and goes up to heaven, and only carries his body around on earth.[33] Obviously, that results already in two types of angels - those that were created as angels, and those who were human, but graduated to being angels by their own exertion, a process which makes them superior. Certain humans apparently are angelic by definition, not just by their own exertion, as Chrysostom concludes commenting on St. Paul's 'Given by angels in the hands of an agent' (Galatians 3.19). Chrysostom thinks this either means priests as angels, or giving law is part of the angels' service to God.[34]

Still, even among the group of celestial angels - without any differentiation in kind - there seem to be fluctuations in rank. Chrysostom comments on I Timothy 21-23 - 'I charge thee before God and the lord Jesus Christ and the elect angels'. Chrysostom interprets this process simply as an act of testimony, the same as one would observe on earth - it does not reflect differences in rank.[35] Maybe Chrysostom's statement here is only the expedient of the moment, trying to explain Timothy before hurrying on in his commentary.

An important addition to New Testament angelology is made by Paul in the shape of 'thrones, dominions, principalities, powers' (Colossians 1.16), and they appear in Chrysostom, joining the established angels in their relation to man:

> [Paul:]'To proclaim to the Gentiles the unfathomable wealth of Christ, and to show all... so that now will be known to the principalities and powers in heaven through the Church the thousandfold wisdom of God.' - Right, that this secret had not been given to humans, but do you also want to enlighten the angels and archangels, the principalities and powers? -Yes.

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30 C Genesis 58.3: PG53-54.509-510: BVIII.205.

31 C Ephesians 10.2: PG62.76D-77A.

32 C I Corinth. 22.2: PG61.182-183: BXVI.614.

33 C Romans 14.6: PG60.518A.

34 C Galatians 3.19 : PG61.654D.

35 C I Timothy 16.1: PG62.587BC.

C Ephesians 7.1: PG62.49C

The expression here seems to be not of superiority and inferiority of the different groups of human and angelic beings, but of their different roles in divine dispensation. Also, and this idea will appear again, if something gets communicated to the powers of heaven, it is via the Church - which one tends to think of as a basically earthly institution. There is a problem of two Churches, the earthly institution being one, but its prototype, God's predestined idea of the Church being the other.

The Pauline concept of angelic beings also appears when Chrysostom moves in the context of the Old Testament. Chrysostom tries to describe what the frequent injunction 'Praise the Lord, heavens' means. He reminds us that it is the function of angels to praise the Lord, and then emphasizes the difference between spiritual and material creation, to which latter class celestial bodies belong. And he goes on to say that by 'heavens' also celestial bodies are called upon to venerate the Lord, in addition to Cherubim, Seraphim, dominions, principalities. The injunction includes everything that is created.[36] In another text based on the New Testament, Cherubim and Seraphim are also listed with other heavenly species, amongst whom appear archangels as well. They come third after angels and archangels in most of the crescendos Chrysostom, based on Paul, uses to expound the holiness of heavenly inhabitants. And he stresses the 'double difference' in this holiness - in relation to man, and to the higher powers.[37] This amalgamation of Old Testament elements, the New Testament concept of the elevation of man, and even the idea of Paul himself in heaven is expressed in the following passage. The angels are described by comparison with Paul, who invariably is given preference over them:

> He [Paul] behaved as if he dwelled in the company of angels....he had it in his heart not to be inferior to the powers up above. And he did travel throughout the world as if he had wings...Some of the angels often are responsible for different peoples, but not one among them has guided the people confided to him in the way Paul has done for the entire world...
> **De laudibus sancti Pauli apostoli 2.8: SC300.156**

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[36] C Psalms 148.1: PG55.484-486: BX.36.

[37] C John 14.2: PG59.94A.

A conventional notion of angels appears - that they travel on wings is implied. More interesting is of course the idea of angels executing government or administration or simply supervising duties - an idea that has been met with in earlier authors and that lends itself well to furnishing a court-heaven parallel. It is based on the angels associated with specific nations in Daniel 10.13, 20f., and was used by Eusebius. This function is here compared to the activity of Paul, which was, however, on a larger scale than that of any angel.

There is another important aspect of the New Testament in that it introduces the concepts of Resurrection and the Second Coming, bringing new tasks for angelic beings. In Chrysostom, Resurrection once is described 'as if a *basileus* should command and say: "let those who were shut up go forth, and let the servants lead them out"'.[38] A more colourful quotation involves different images in addition to the heavenly beings:

> The mystical table is prepared, the lamb of God sacrifices itself for you...the Cherubim are there, the Seraphim employ their wings, the spirits cover their faces with their wings, all the incorporeal powers, following the example of the father, intercede for you, the divine fire descends from heaven, the blood runs from the pure flank of the Lamb for your sakes and fills the cup...
> **De paenitentia IX.1: PG49-50.345: BIII.584**

There are more descriptions of the occupants of heaven in the context of the Second Coming, where the emphasis is not so much on the rising of man. The functions of the heavenly beings change from voicing adulation and glorification to being terrible and terrified, 'He speaks of the powers of the heavens, and the angels and archangels, and the invisible powers; themselves in profound terror', and Chrysostom compares that terror to the phenomenon of people in court being impressed by the judge even when they themselves are not being sentenced.[39] They are the couriers of the judge:

> The same applies to the Only One: when we see the couriers of the heavens, and the *basileus* of the angels descending surrounded by the peoples of the heavens, the miracle [that man mounts the royal throne] seems even greater. What will that be like, seeing our nature carried on the wings of the Cherubim, escorted everywhere by the countless hosts of angels?

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[38] C I Thess. 8.1 (I Thess. 4.15-17): PG62.439: LF14.415.

[39] De cruce et latrone II.4: PG49-50.414: BIV.38.

Daemones non gubernare mundum I.2: PG49-50.247: BIII.417

Chrysostom consistently uses a more militaristic language when describing this event, for both the judged and those acting for the judge:

> The menacing aspect of the spiritual powers...the destruction of all the dignities of the earth, of *basileis*, generals, consuls and eparchs, the presence of the legions of angels, the almost innumerable cohorts of martyrs, apostles, hermits....
> **C Psalms 46.2: PG55.211: BIX.232**

The earthly system of hierarchy is destroyed and replaced by the heavenly structures, although the terminology for both is virtually the same. A similar and very typical passage is given in the original here, to demonstrate Chrysostom's range of militaristic and royal terms which he applies to heaven:

> *...ἀγγέλων τάγματα, ἀρχαγγέλων συμμορίας, μαρτύρων φρατρίας, δικαίων χορούς, προφητῶν καὶ ἀποστόλων δήμους, καὶ ἐν μέσῳ τῶν στρατοπέδων αὐλῶν ἐκείνων ὁ βασιλεὺς φαινόμενος ἐν ἀρρήτῳ τινὶ καὶ ἀφράστῳ δόξῃ.*
> **De sancta pentecoste I.5: PG49-50.461: BIV.113**[40]

In another text, the occupants and fittings of heaven leave their previous perimeter and are scattered all over the universe in this image of the final day. After introducing the usual elements - the river of fire, the sun and moon obscured, the stars falling out of heaven, the heavens [in the sense of firmament] themselves folding up like a tent, the angels are described as running all over the globe, and manning the gate to heaven, while the demons administer hell.[41] Then again, the angels take over a specific role in a specific scene - 'they run to and fro' on judgement day.[42] The *topos* of the running angels also figures in connection with the Ascension. The Master of Angels sends them ahead, but he reserves for himself the message of peace (*τὴν εὐαγγελικήν*).[43]

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[40] Translation: '...the battalions of angels, the divisions of archangels, the brotherhood of martyrs, the choirs of the just, the demes of the prophets and apostles, and in the middle of the armament of yonder halls the *basileus* appearing in unspeakable and inexpressible glory.'

[41] Adversus oppugnatores vitae monasticae 3.1.: PG47-48.349-350: BI.141.

[42] C Romans 6.6: PG60.430A.

[43] In ascensionem 3: PG51-52.776: BVI.569.

So far, Chrysostom's varying statements on angelology could be identified quite well with various concepts contained in Scripture, and he was found to follow scriptural precedent quite closely - much more closely, in fact, than ever in connection with 'the *basileus*'. In the following paragraphs, some descriptions of angelic beings are compiled where Chrysostom does not seem to respond to any particular scriptural source, but where angels are involved in certain concerns of his own and are made to help his argument.

One such concern is priesthood. Chrysostom explains that priests can be angels, or are angels by default - and that is reminiscent of the evidence for the superiority of priesthood over humans of all kinds in Chapter 7. Attention is drawn to the responsibility of the priestly office:

> When he calls down the Holy Spirit...on which rank do we put [the priest] there?...Consider what the hands must be like that do such a service...at that time even angels surround the priest, the whole Sanctum and the space around the altar is filled with heavenly hosts, to honour him who is on the altar.... I heard [of] an old man, very respected, who was used to seeing visions, that he suddenly at that moment had seen a great number of angels, shrouded in shining vestments, bowing down to the ground around the altar, as soldiers can be seen around a *basileus*... Another...has told me that people on the point of dying, if they have a clean conscience...are received and accompanied by angels as if by a bodyguard in the moment when they give up their ghost.[44]
> **De sacerdotio VI.4: SC272.317-318**

The rest of the passage concentrates on human visions of angels. But humans and angels can have features in common. Chrysostom points out that 'if profound differences separate the condition of the angels and ours, one feature is still common to both angels and men: prayer, and in this respect there is no difference between the two natures'.[45]

Sometimes, Chrysostom can also be found trying to explain to his flock the function, purpose and behaviour of the angelic population of heaven. Appropriate descriptions turn out to be comparatively specific, although the details are isolated. Incorporeal and immaterial powers suffer neither

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[44] Angels and the Eucharist: often appear together in Chrysostom. Relevant passages have been compiled by A. Naegle, *Die Eucharistielehre des Hl. Johannes Chrysostomus* (Freiburg, 1900) p. 104-105.

[45] De precatione II: PG49-50.779: BIV.599.

envy nor ambition nor any other passions.[46] But in other situations, they are described as being static, and movement is counted as a frivolity - that is in a passage that compares the stately, slow-moving ranks of the angels, which humans should endeavour to join, with the wild dances of demons - the sort of dance humans fall for in their earthly life; maybe Chrysostom is thinking of Antiochene nightlife here.[47]

On looking back over the discussion of heavenly beings, and on thinking about any hierarchical principles governing them, one will find that they remain an idiosyncratic group, mainly because Chrysostom seemingly does not feel any need to integrate the different scriptural traditions from which he works. One has reason to presume the same inconsistency for other parts of the heavenly hierarchy. Angels never were identified with great power, the emphasis was on their serving functions. But there is one element in most descriptions of heaven that like its counterpart in the human world stands for power, for dominion: the throne.

The problem of the throne falls into two parts. There is the one throne of the one God dominating heaven in the Old Testament. Thrones seem to exist at various levels in the New Testament. This leads to the second component: 'thrones' also denote one specific class of angelic beings in St. Paul's letters. The examination of this question will introduce most of those angelic inhabitants of heaven which are not 'angels' with any humanoid connotations. It will be found that Chrysostom can use both concepts of throne - as 'seat', and as 'being' - in one breath, but one can attempt to isolate the concept of God enthroned first.

In an Old Testament context, but also referring to the Last Judgement, Chrysostom reminds us 'that this [God's] throne is not composed of wood or some other coarse material, it is a throne of justice'.[48] And that Christ occupies the royal throne is linked with the gift of humans being able to lead a life similar to that of the angels.[49] But there are more extensive definitions:

> 'Your throne will be eternal'. That word throne has here a greater significance and wants to express the entire rule. David predicts

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[46] De sacerdotio 5.8: SC272.303.

[47] C Matthew 48.4: PG57-58.491B.

[48] C Psalms 9.4: PG55.127: BIX.83.

[49] De sancta pentecoste II.1: PG49-50.463: BIV.118.

> that this throne will be eternal. Isaiah on his part announces that the throne is elevated...another prophet sees [God] seated on a throne of glory... 9. All these descriptions want to show that this kingship is eternal... As the throne is the symbol of royalty, so the sceptre is the emblem of both royal power and royal justice...
> **C Psalms 44.8-9: PG55.196: BIX.205**

And frequently 'throne' as 'seat' refers to the enthroned Christ in Chrysostom's texts. There are simple statements concerned with this fact. The goodness of Christ is demonstrated by the throne on which he shall sit.[50] Man is admitted to this heavenly throne room evoked in this passage describing a service in church:

> ...as we present ourselves before God, let us bear in mind that we do not speak before an ordinary reunion, vulgar, but before an assembly composed from the entire universe, or rather of the people who inhabit the heavens, and in their middle the throne of the *basileus* of the heavens is set up.
> **C Psalms 4.4: PG55.45: BVIII.558**

Throne is a symbol of royalty, 'and as there is only one throne, both share the honour of the same kingship'.[51] And in a different text, but also referring to Psalm 109, Chrysostom quotes David from verse 1: 'The Lord said to my lord - be seated at my right, so that I can make a footstool from your enemies'. This throne is again above all the other heavenly powers who just execute God's orders. But who are the enemies? Not surprisingly, the text is Chrysostom's manifesto against Jews and pagans.[52]

But this simple system - one throne, the hierarchically highest person occupying it, hierarchically lower persons surrounding it – is not the only pattern. Again, statements more closely following the New Testament introduce the complicating factor of man's elevation through Christ. There is an interesting passage describing Christ as for ever inhabiting the tabernacle of human flesh and not leaving it again, thus signifying this flesh to be worthy of the royal throne, and of the worship of the heavenly beings, powers, principalities and - again - thrones.[53] Chrysostom here uses both 'throne' as 'seat' and 'thrones' as 'angelic beings', and maybe to separate them somewhat he inverts Paul's sequence - Colossians 1.16 runs 'thrones, dominions, principalities,

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[50] C Matthew 47.4: PG57-58.486A.

[51] C Psalms 109.2: PG55.267-268: BIX.331.

[52] Adversus Judaeos V: PG47-48.820: BII.319.

[53] C John 11.2: PG59.80B.

powers'.[54] A hint of the difference between the royal throne, and thrones as abstract units? The question of Christ in human flesh, Christ enthroned, and Christ in relation to humans is taken up again in simpler fashion later in the same work, commenting on John 20.17-18:

> For because he had said, 'Say to the brethren', in order that they might not expect any equality from this, he showed the difference. He was about to sit on his Father's throne, but they to stand by. So albeit in his substance according to the flesh he became our brother, yet in honour he greatly differed from us, it cannot even be told how much.
> **C John 86.2: PG59.470A**

The difference in honour - the hierarchy - between Christ and humans is expressed by these humans standing around his throne. Man is not only admitted to the throne room during a service, he is moving closer to the throne itself:

> ...that you have a Father in heaven.... He lifted you up to that heavenly rank, made you part of that choir above, why do you pull yourself down again? You are standing next to the royal throne and utter blasphemy? Do you not fear the *basileus* could see in that an offence against himself? When in our presence a slave hits or offends a fellow-slave, so we correct him, even if he was right, but you stand next to the throne of the *basileus*, and offend your brother?
> **C Ephesians 14.4: PG62.105AB**

Obvious court associations come to mind. And this is the kind of metaphor that could have been leading to or been a part of an established court-heaven parallel. It is really the master-slave relation that is compared here to the heavenly master and the humans around him, but the heavenly setting with its code of behaviour is humanized enough. However, humans do not only find themselves close to a throne. It is by the descent of the Holy Ghost that human nature was lifted up into heaven and onto the royal throne.[55]

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[54] Carr, *Angels*, p.49: 'The word *θρόνοι* is used here [Colossians 1.16] either in a wholly unique sense as 'angelic powers', or, as is more probable, by metonymy for the angels of God's presence.... In the New Testament, *θρόνος* refers exclusively to the throne of God or of Christ. Whenever it refers to some other throne, it is qualified and the reference is explained [often in Revelations and apocryphal books].... It would therefore appear impossible for the term *θρόνοι*, when used absolutely, to refer to anything other than the heavenly court, which sits with God and worships him.'

[55] C Matthew 1.1: PG57-58.15C and C Matthew 7.6: PG57-58.80D.

The apostles introduce an additional element. Interpreting Matthew 19.19 Chrysostom explains that the apostles will sit on twelve thrones when Christ is enthroned to share in his glory.[56] But, Chrysostom continues, these twelve thrones are meant to be expressive of the unspeakable honour accorded to the apostles, although they do not carry the full implications of God's and Christ's 'throne'. This full meaning is only owned by Christ's throne - to be a sign of honour as well as an indication of supreme judgement. Yet in a different treatise the apostles also judge the 'descendants of the patriarchs', with the proviso that nobody from outside the choir of the apostles will occupy their thrones.[57] That the apostles are to judge the twelve tribes of Israel from their heavenly thrones is also contained in the commentary on Ephesians, but in that passage there is an additional hint concerning the hierarchy of these twelve thrones in relation to Christ's throne:

> Do you want to know how he transported us into heaven? Listen to what Christ himself says to his disciples: 'You will sit on twelve thrones and judge the twelve tribes of Israel'. And again: 'The sitting to my right and left is not mine to dispense, but it is prepared to some by my father.' So it is prepared. Rightly says the apostle: 'Through the mercy given to us in Christ'. For sitting to the right is an honour surpassing any honour and to which no other is equal.
> **C Ephesians 4.2: PG62.33B**

Referring to Matthew 20.23, Chrysostom also states that nobody will sit at Christ's right or left, because the level of his throne is unattainable for humans, saints, apostles, angels. Then again he qualifies this to the effect that he who will suffer most for Christ will gain those adjacent thrones.[58] The honour implied by 'sitting at the right hand' especially is linked again with royalty - it indicates an equality between Father and Son. It is connected with the concept of the throne of the *basileus*, while the 'thrones' of the apostles might be seen merely as expressions of hierarchical position within the heavenly community, and are hence close to the Pauline concept discussed above of thrones, dominions, principalities, powers as angelic beings.

One has seen Chrysostom emphasizing that 'throne' is a translation of 'honour'. Chrysostom followed Scripture in investing God's throne with

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[56] C Matthew 64.2: PG57-58.611A.
[57] De virginitate 82.2: SC 125.384.
[58] C Matthew 65.3: PG57-58.620B-D.

supreme honour and ultimate judgement, the apostles' seats or positions with relative honour and circumscribed powers of judgement. So even if 'thrones' themselves must be considered immaterial, they still signify a hierarchy. Embedded into the average listener's imagination, this arrangement would easily stand comparison with existing earthly hierarchical systems.

Superimposed on this scheme one must find God independent from concepts like 'throne', maybe even in an ultimate heaven. Chrysostom adopts I Timothy 6.15-16:

> Let us then call God '*basileus* of *basileis*, Lord of Lords, the only immortal one, the one living in unapproachable light, whom nobody has seen and nobody has power to see, to whom belong honour and rule throughout the ages'.
> **De incomprehensibili dei natura 3: SC28.169: PG48.720C**

Even more than with other members of the population of heaven Chrysostom warns against material concepts in connection with this image:

> '*Basileus* of *basileis* in unapproachable light...' He [Paul] did not say: 'he who is an unapproachable light', but 'living in unapproachable light', so that you understand, if the dwelling is unapproachable, God living in this dwelling is even more so! ...and not that you imagine God living in a circumscribed place!
> **De incomprehensibili dei natura 3: SC28.172: PG48.721B**

'Light' is here translated as inaccessibility, intangibility, and thus for Chrysostom as immateriality. It is also no accident that both these passages are taken from 'De incomprehensibili dei natura', in the course of which he again and again urges not only this incomprehensibility, but also inexpressibility. God cannot be described, the relation to man can only be expressed by relative terms - Chrysostom does this frequently to achieve his didactic purposes, sometimes with very mundane examples: 'The distance between man and God is as between mud and potter, or even greater'.[59]

But however remote God seems, with Christ's death God becomes more accessible. To rip the curtain, to set off the earthquake was partly an

[59] De incomprehensibili dei natura 2: SC28.142: PG48.715C.

expression of displeasure, according to Chrysostom, but partly also the signal that the inaccessible has become accessible, that man can glorify God now in the Holy of Holies itself.[60] The hierarchical step is clearly diminished, the Holy of Holies comes over as a meeting place between the heavenly hierarchy and the ultimate God. The same is expressed elsewhere in the cycle: again the humans are called into the Holy of Holies.[61] Does this represent something like a reception hall or a throne room? Potentially yes, but no attending ranks are described here - the description of the Holy of Holies and its accessibility to humans in Chrysostom seems to be an idea related, but not integrated with his descriptions of heaven. The Holy of Holies seems to be a completely separate, abstract unit.

What conclusions can one draw about a possible hierarchy of heaven in Chrysostom? Firstly, he makes clear that hierarchical differences and distinctions do exist. Secondly, there are heavenly powers, like angels, arranged in some order in spiritual space. These angels do have contact with human souls, humans appear in heaven in the New Testament. Still, lastly and most importantly, one should consider how closely Chrysostom keeps to Scripture in questions of angelology, adopting elements from all its phases and parts with relatively little adaptation. He does not attempt to turn into a rigid structure what he considers intentionally elusive, and he never tries to distract from this elusiveness - for him, that elusiveness seems to be one of the defining qualities of the elements and members of heaven.

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[60] C Matthew 88.2: PG57-58.777A.

[61] C Matthew 85.4: PG57-58.763A-764A.

12 The Heavenly Jerusalem

When discussing the fittings and hierarchies of heaven, one aspect was left out - that of the heavenly city when it is specified as 'Heavenly Jerusalem' or 'Jerusalem Above'. This chapter tries to fathom Chrysostom's view of this image. To start with - what sort of link did he have with the real Jerusalem? In 397 Chrysostom moved to Constantinople, which the Byzantines increasingly came to regard as their New Jerusalem. Despite his comparative proximity to the Old Jerusalem when he still lived at Antioch, references to Jerusalem are surprisingly rare considering the immense bulk of his work. It is because of this scantiness that the entire material can be presented and analysed in the frame of one comparatively short chapter. It is possible to discern what different definitions of Jerusalem Chrysostom uses - real, biblical and heavenly. And to follow him as he develops a concept of each definition is a fascinating experience of how concepts that have become somewhat fossilized and taken for granted in later ages may have evolved originally.

Chrysostom seems to have had little time for Jerusalem as it was in his day. Although it is not sure that he actually ever visited the city, Chrysostom thought he knew what the city was like. In the context of describing Jerusalem's past importance, he sketches an impression of isolation:

> That is how it was in ancient times [Chrysostom probably means before the destructions under the Roman emperors], but what sorry sight does this city afford us today! Profound isolation, a mass of ruins, the remains of some buildings that escaped fire and destruction, and affording but a miserable aspect themselves, sad and lonely vestiges that can hardly give a faint idea of former greatness.
> **C Psalms 121.2: PG55.348-350: BIX.472-475**

That is a sharp contrast to the attitude of 'renaissance' of Jerusalem in the time of Eusebius, Helena and Constantine. It is seemingly the only reference to real, fourth-century Jerusalem. If Chrysostom is without illusions in this respect, does he compensate for it by cultivating an image of the heavenly Jerusalem? In the Cappadocians, almost contemporary with Chrysostom, descriptions can be found of complete

supracelestial Jerusalems, describing walls and towers made of gems and precious metals and probably based on the Revelation. For such evocative illustrations one will for the most part look in vain in Chrysostom. Apart from the possibility that the Revelation was not part of his canon,[1] the explanation for this seems to be that in the first place Chrysostom does not consider 'Jerusalem' a spiritual concept that is completely disassociated from the real city. He takes a different approach in that he concentrates above all on Jerusalem as described in the Old Testament, which for him means that he is examining the divinely dispensed historical development of a city. This divine dispensation is expressed in a passage where Chrysostom describes how the conquest of Jerusalem and the destruction of the temple is really saved up for the prophesized day. No mention of a heavenly Jerusalem is made.[2]

The same sense of pragmatic reality mixed with predestined fate flavours his view of the population of this city in biblical times. The Jewish inhabitants are described as a hostile mass, attacking both the prophets and Christ owing to misunderstanding the prediction of Jerusalem's ruin because of Christ.[3] And he also mentions Matthew 23.37, in which Christ calls the city 'Jerusalem, that kills the prophets...'. Chrysostom amplifies this statement to present an unfavourable image of the ancient Jewish population:

> Jeremiah was among his fellow citizens and told them that the city would fall into the hands of the Chaldaeans: that was not even a prophecy, they could see with their own eyes that it would happen...but they rose against Jeremiah.
> **De prophetiarum obscuritate I.3: PG56.169: BX.363**

And in connection with Isaiah Chrysostom gives a description of Jerusalem 'full of Jews', again as a hostile environment.[4] But parallel to this strong anti-Jewish argument that renders Jerusalem fraught with danger for the preachers and precursors of the New Law, Chrysostom also develops a description of Jerusalem as the spiritual rallying point of the tribes of Israel, he underlines its importance as their holy city. Sometimes this point is made in a negative manner, to emphasize the inferior spiritual possibilities of the ancient believers: while the Jews

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[1] S. Verosta, *Chrysostomus*, p.185

[2] Adversus Judaeos VI.3: PG47-48.908: BII.458.

[3] De prophetiarum obscuritate I.3: PG56.168: BX.362.

[4] De mutatione nominum I.1: PG51-52.114-115: BV.162.

invoked God from Sion, the Christian can pray to God from absolutely anywhere - 'at sea, in a hostel', to name but two of the possible venues.[5] Often, this attitude towards the Israelites as towards doubtful candidates for the praise of the Lord is upheld, even if Jerusalem itself is praised as a holy city.[6] This view is repeated frequently and fits in with Chrysostom's general opinion that God often had to make allowance for the primitive nature of the faith and the imagination of the ancient Israelites. The same impression of careful coaching in the matters of faith is contained in a slightly different definition of the importance of Jerusalem. Chrysostom quotes the Psalmist:

> 'Jerusalem, praise the Lord, Sion, praise your God'... It is not to the city, but to its inhabitants that the Prophet directs his words, obviously...he exhorts them to give thanks to God for the benefactions they have received, and to put their confidence not in the height of their walls, nor in the firmness of their bastions, but in his good foresight...
> **C Psalms 147.1: PG55.478: BX.25**

And subsequently Chrysostom informs his flock that the very security of the city is part of the gift of God. All these elements come together in a lengthy passage where Chrysostom also describes further aspects of biblical Jerusalem, taking up the passage previous to the one immediately above:

> These feasts they celebrated at Jerusalem were an occasion for the different tribes to re-enter in relation with each other, and their general reunions in the holy city were for all a source of greater faith in God, of a more vivid piety, and countless other goods.
> 'For it is there that the thrones of justice are prepared, the thrones for the house of David' [says the Psalmist]. There, another prerogative of the holy city, for that it was a royal city is the sense of these words.... Jerusalem was, in effect, the seat of a twofold sovereignty: the authority of the priests, and that of the *basileis*, united with each other by law, and adorning the city with a double crown and a double diadem. There the judges sat to whom all the cases were deferred that surpassed the capacities of the ordinary judges. Thus, when a sentence passed in one of the other cities was under some doubt, the case, as in appeal, was submitted to the appreciation of the judges at Jerusalem to receive a definitive solution. That is how it was in ancient times, but what sorry sight does this city afford us today! [Profound isolation, a mass of ruins, the remains of some buildings that escaped fire and destruction, and a miserable aspect themselves, sad and lonely vestiges that can hardly give a faint idea of former greatness.] Also the Psalmist does not want to end his speech with such a sad

[5] C Psalms 133: PG55.387; BIX.538.

[6] C Psalms 121.2: PG55.348: BIX.472.

> scene, and therefore gives the Jews brighter hopes [by saying]: 'Demand everything possible for the peace of Jerusalem'...another version says: 'Love Jerusalem tenderly'. That means, demand that it will be re-established in its ancient prosperity.
> **C Psalms 121.2: PG55.348-350: BIX.472-475**

The passage is quoted at length because it illustrates how Chrysostom tries to explain the biblical text to his flock, and how his descriptions and the images he uses simply want to make a biblical sentence clear, aim to give it some life, not to construct a theological concept. The last two sentences introduce a lengthy definition of Jerusalem as a projection of all that is good and hopeful, not a proud, victorious material city, but a spiritual rallying point. Chrysostom paraphrases this process, which is really a psychological evolution, in great detail.

This is very different from the earlier anti - Jewish sentiments. But it is from this, from Jerusalem as a political centre and as the focus of spiritual projections, that Chrysostom develops a higher Jerusalem, a city that itself becomes an idea and thus rises to a metaphysical level. This elevation begins with Jerusalem as an ideological rallying point for the dispersed Jews. Viewed from distant Babylon, the pragmatic functions of the city as described above recede and Jerusalem as a symbol of tribal and religious identity comes to the fore; and it is this emotion that Chrysostom links to the spiritual identity and inner well-being of the individual Christian:

> The Israelites felt inflamed with strong desire for Jerusalem, because they were exiled from it. Many of us will one day feel the same because we are excluded from the Jerusalem above. But the Israelites at least can have the hope of returning to their home, but what hope is there for us of re-entering the celestial home we have lost?
> **C Psalms 136.1: PG55.406: BIX.571**

And this is a consistent idea of Jerusalem with Chrysostom; it appears again in the same text. Only those Israelites who longed for Jerusalem were delivered from captivity. And if we remain entangled with the present life instead of 'being inflamed with love for the heavenly Jerusalem', we too can never be 'at home'.[7] The relation of the Israelites to Jerusalem has become a metaphor for the relation of believers to heaven. When Jerusalem is already thus established, it seems but a small step to an independent heavenly concept of the city.

[7] C Psalms 119.1: PG55.339: BIX.456.

The switch to the heavenly Jerusalem can be made after contemplation: 'measure the circuit of Sion, walk around its perimeter...' , the projected ideal city and the heavenly city begin to merge.[8] Chrysostom takes this step himself in a passage uniting the ideological significance of Jerusalem with its spiritual dimension. He speaks about how to describe Jerusalem, and how it became heavenly:

> Why does the royal prophet [David the Psalmist] tell you to walk around the city [in contemplation], to count the number of its towers, to appraise its structures, to contemplate its buildings...? To teach the generation that will follow...they have lost all hope of regaining possession of this city. It is thus restored to them, and not just as they have lost it, but in a far superior state of prosperity, of splendour, of glory, of authority, of wealth, of magnificence of its buildings, of commerce, of power, of resources, of abundance in all respects.
> 4. And we, let us not stop considering and contemplating Jerusalem in ourselves, our true city. Have the beauty of this city before your eyes at all times - she is the metropolis of the *basileus* of the ages, in which are united the spirits of the just, the choir of the patriarchs, of the apostles, of all the saints ... there beauty is invisible and immortal.
> **C Psalms 47.3-4: PG55.221: BIX.250-251**

This is the level at which Jerusalem as the 'metropolis of the *basileus*' first comes in, together with a string of images consistently used by Chrysostom in describing heaven. But how serious or consistent is he about God living in Jerusalem? Chrysostom makes another statement to this effect - God lives in Jerusalem in his comments on another Psalm.[9] But he more often than not tries to qualify this literal interpretation, and finds several solutions for this problematic turn of speech. On the question of where to look for God he says:

> 'Praise the Lord who lives in Sion'.....What do you say, Holy Prophet? He who has the heaven for a throne and the earth as a footstool for his feet, and holds the abysses of the world in his hands, lives in Sion? Yes, surely, but speaking thus he does not intend to circumscribe this majesty in one place, he simply wants to express a preference of God for that place, and the element of familiarity with this place...
> **C Psalms 9.6: PG55.130: BIX.89**

Similar explanations are given to 'The Lord is great... in the city of our God on the mountain' in Psalm 47. If God is so great, can he be limited to one city or mountain, Chrysostom asks rhetorically. 'No, says

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[8] C Psalms 47.3-4: PG55.220: BIX.249.

[9] C Psalms 134.7: PG55.398: BIX.558.

the prophet, I speak like that because we have known the greatness of God before all other people...'.[10] This ties in with a completely different statement Chrysostom made at Constantinople - Christ lives in the entire universe, which is just a small town to him. 'He belongs to the city above whose architect and creator is God'.[11] Apart from the problem of Jerusalem as a divine residence, there are two more images Chrysostom refers to in the frame of one single statement. In the passage quoted above he had already mentioned that Jerusalem (Sion) is also the image, the figure of the Church.[12] This appears again:

> We have said enough about the literal sense of the Psalm...Paul knew the Jerusalem above, about which he says: 'The Jerusalem above is really free, it is our mother' (Galat.IV.26). He knows also that the church is truly Sion...
> **C Psalms 147.3: PG55.483: BX.32**

Again this is a demonstration of how Chrysostom's mind works. St. Paul's statement that the Jerusalem above is also above description fits in with Chrysostom's warnings against seeing it as a circumscribed place or as a divine dwelling. But when Paul explains this Jerusalem as 'mother', this answers to another of Chrysostom's tenets. For, as has been seen before, he holds generally that the Church is the mother of the faithful, while earthly, imperial rule is the necessarily stern father.[13] And thus in this passage above the two mother symbols, Jerusalem (Sion) and the Church are also seen as symbols for each other.

After this pageant of definitions of Jerusalem one finds that a consistent concept of the heavenly Jerusalem does not emerge. There are no details that allow a substantial reconstruction of a city above. But what has emerged more clearly is an impression of how Chrysostom may have arrived at this rather sketchy Jerusalem, and this method - or lack of it - seems to be the reason for its inconsistencies: Chrysostom is merely trying to find explanations for biblical passages as he goes along.

It makes sense, therefore, to discuss briefly the distribution of these explanations within the works of Chrysostom. The overwhelming majority were found in his commentary on the Psalms, two passages

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[10] C Psalms 47.1: PG55.217: BIX.242.

[11] Quod frequenter conveniendum sit 3: PG63.464: BXX.473.

[12] C Psalms 9.6: PG55.130: BIX.89.

[13] Statues 6.1: PG49-50.81CD.

were taken from his homily on the 'Obscurity of the Prophets', one from his treatise 'Against the Jews'.[14] This pattern seems to suggest that Chrysostom on his own account did not think in terms of a heavenly Jerusalem. Cryptic remarks about 'the Jerusalem Above' are scattered sparingly and at random through his work, but this term is never defined any more closely and must simply be interpreted as a synonym for heaven. He only seems to formulate a concept of Jerusalem when he is prompted by the subject matter of his biblical commentaries, in this case the prominence of Jerusalem in the Psalms. In trying to explain the Psalms to his congregation, Jerusalem comes up for interpretation, a paraphrase has to be developed. The concept does not appear in other commentaries or homilies written before or after that on Psalms.

If this is indeed the rather random process by which Chrysostom developed his concept of Jerusalem, it may serve as a warning model for the task of reconstructing and analysing other Chrysostomian concepts whose evolution is less obvious because of their sheer ubiquity - for example the concept of heaven. In these scant passages on Jerusalem Chrysostom reveals yet again that his uppermost concern is to make the Christian who is listening to his instructions understand, even if only for the moment, what a particular term or a phrase in Scripture means. Two days later, in another sermon on another psalm, Chrysostom may give a slightly different explanation which, while being at odds with the one given earlier, makes perfect sense in the context of what he wants to bring across to his congregation on that day. The point may be exaggerated here, but should be considered when marvelling at how images that we take for granted, like the celestial Jerusalem with all its pageantry, came into being.

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[14] There are some more references to the Jews in their relationship to Jerusalem in 'Adversos Judaeos', but they add nothing to the material quoted here and have been discussed in their special context by R.L. Wilken, *John Chrysostom and the Jews. Rhetoric and reality in the late 4th century.* (Berkeley, 1983), p.148-160.

13 Chrysostom and St. Paul

Not for a moment should one pretend that the complexities of the relationship Chrysostom had with St. Paul can be covered in the frame of one short chapter. It is merely an attempt to illuminate the specific statements of Chrysostom about Paul with a reference to *basileis* and heaven. But the intensity of this relationship should be illustrated, partly because it meant so much to Chrysostom, influencing his argument at times, and partly because there is an aspect of his attitude towards the *basileus* that concentrates on and is conditioned by Paul's fate at imperial hands. This is why the chapter is found at this point in the thesis, forming a bridge between its two major parts. It looks back at evidence involving Paul taken from sermons preached in Antioch. It also looks ahead to the time when Chrysostom will suffer a fate similar to Paul's, and how Paul consequently figures in sermons created in Constantinople and beyond. The chapter therefore has a key position, dealing with something that in my view is a key issue when discussing any aspect of Chrysostom, and which also contributes to the variations of his God-*basileus* parallel.

Chrysostom's preoccupation with Paul, even apart from his commentaries on Acts and the Epistles, can be traced to his very first writings, and is strongly present throughout the Antioch period. Along with Matthew, Paul is according to my strong impression the most quoted biblical source in Chrysostom's work. Homilies on questions of daily life, on isolated subjects that are not part of a commentary on a part of the bible usually boil down to being commentaries on some fragment from Paul. The text 'In illud: *Propter fornicationes uxorem*' is a somewhat overstated case in point; Chrysostom's instructions about married life are taken from Paul almost literally, 'Paul establishes the laws that should govern marriage'.[1] Chrysostom is aware of the presence of Paul in most of his homilies, and is glad about it:

> I am grateful that the blessed Paul has come in again - he in himself is enough consolation.

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[1] In illud: *Propter fornicationes uxorem* I.2: PG51-52.210: BV.314.

Ad Stagirium a daemone vexatum 3.11: PG47-48.485-486: BI.373

As a possible reason for this very strong preoccupation which seems to go beyond the usual love for the Apostle among the Fathers one could put forward that Chrysostom shares with Paul his great concern with preaching. Neither of them is focused on theological definitions and theories, for both the driving force in their lives is bringing the Word to the people. Chrysostom's love for Paul did not escape notice, and Baur offers a hagiographical reference to a legend which describes Chrysostom communing with a picture of Paul.[2]

The influence of Paul on Chrysostom's style is considerable. In fact, in homilies and passages where Chrysostom is apparently not thinking of Paul, his argument tends to be more flexible and differentiating. But of this influence on his thinking Chrysostom is not aware.[3] Much rather, he himself describes the extent of his love:

> I love all the saints, but most of all the blessed Paul, that vessel of the Word, that celestial trumpet, that cherished companion of Christ. That I say, and if I am open about it, it is so that you can share these sentiments. People possessed by carnal love do not dare to admit it...but those burning with spiritual love will never cease to proclaim it...
> **In illud: *Utinam sutineretis modicum quid insipientiae meae* 1: PG51-52.301: BV.467**

And he again takes pains to set off this true love against carnal love, as if he wanted to justify or defend his sentiment:

> Was he not a man like ourselves, the blessed Paul? I am burning with desire for that man, it is because of that that his name is constantly in my mouth, and his soul is in my thought unceasingly as an image and type of perfection, I love to contemplate his disdain for all human passions...
> **C Genesis 11.5: PG53-54.95-96: BVII.139**

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[2] Baur I, p.247. Baur himself sees an affinity of mind and soul between Chrysostom and Paul - Baur I, p.241.

[3] E. Hoffmann-Aleith, "Das Paulusverständnis des Johannes Chrysostomus", *Zeitschrift für Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft* 38 (1939) 182-188, makes the same observations. On p.183: 'In seiner [John's] den Unterbau liefernder Theologie fällt auf den ersten Blick die Entschiedenheit auf, mit der er ähnlich wie Origenes jede Beschränkung der Willensfreiheit ablehnt und wie er in seiner Auffassung vom Wesen der Gnade, der Bedeutung sittlichen Strebens und dem Glaubensbegriff von Paulus abweicht". And p.187: "So ist die Exegese des Johannes Chrysostomus ein Beispiel von seltener Eindringlichkeit, wie ein Theologe der alten Kirche trotz echter glühender Begeisterung für den Apostel, und im Grunde unbewußt, theologisch andere Wege ging als sein verehrtes Vorbild.".

So St. Paul is also a personal mentor, a *Leitfigur*, for Chrysostom. He is often even adressed rhetorically in mid - stream of a homily: *τί ποιεῖς, ὦ Παῦλε;*.[4] One should add that the Commentary on Genesis is one of the few texts where references to Paul are rare - doubtless because Chrysostom's mind is focused on the other end of Scripture from Paul. Little fictitious rhetorical conversations with Paul can also be found when commenting Job: 'what are you doing, Paul, you sap the courage of your friends - no, says he, I strengthen it', and by being all of a piece with such exclamations found in other texts support the authenticity of that disputed text.[5]

Such instances testify the extent to which Paul is alive for Chrysostom, with an intensity that makes him surpass all other saints and figures of the bible. The conduct of Paul exceeds that of Moses and Joseph in being angelical.[6] And 'nobody loved Christ more than Paul', and it is because of this that Paul is elevated to the third heaven.[7]

Chrysostom defends Paul when he finds he could possibly be criticised. Paul is so fond of Titus that he lets his worry about him distract him, and Chrysostom makes excuses.[8] The most serious instance of this is the homily 'In illud: *In faciem ei restiti*' (Galatians 2.11), where Chrysostom is in a conflict between Peter, the most venerable of the original apostles, and Paul - the Apostle. Chrysostom also deeply venerates Peter, if not to the same extent. Peter is more powerful than wearers of purple,[9] and is seen as a counterpart of Paul:

> Consider Paul, whose garments wrought miracles...Consider Peter, whose very shadows were mighty. For, had they not borne the image of a *basileus*, and had their radiance been unapproachable, their garments and shadows had not wrought so mightily. For the garments of a *basileus* are terrible even to robbers.
> **C II Corinth. 7.5 (II Corinth. 3.18): PG61.449: LF27.99**

In the course of 'In illud: *In faciem ei restiti*' Chrysostom movingly tries to explain away the impression of a clash. His attempts to defuse the

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[4] C Genesis 31.2: PG53-54.285: BVII.453.
[5] C Job I.9: SC346.113.
[6] C I Corinth. 25.4 (I Corinth. 2.1): PG61.210: LF9.344.
[7] De sacerdotio 3.7: SC272.157.
[8] C II Corinth. 5.1 (II Corinth. 2.14): PG61.427-428: LF27.68.
[9] C I Corinth. 15.6: PG61.128: BXVI.520.

situation even include the suggestion that 'Peter' was another person of that name. In Chapter 2 he describes how Peter did not want to alienate either Gentiles or Jews, while Paul just wanted to defend the truth of the Gospel. With this Chrysostom hints that Peter does not walk straight (.374). In Chapter 3 Chrysostom levels his only criticism at Paul: why judge Peter publicly? But he also points to the fact that the impassioned rhetorical address of Paul reminds the audience of all the goodness of Peter, his work for the faith (.374). But in Chapter 7 Chrysostom has turned around again: after all, 'what was Peter that Paul was not? Which heart could be more devoted than Paul, who endured death any day for Christ?'(.377). And Chrysostom points out that Paul still considered himself the servant of Peter: 'I am the smallest of the Apostles' (I Corinth 15.9), 'the smallest of all saints' (Ephesians 3.8), (.378).

In Chapter 9 Chrysostom tries a new theory: Christ gave every apostle a task, he entrusted Peter with the Jews and Paul with the Gentiles (.379), and the conflict is a clash of authority on disputed ground. But in Chapter 10 Chrysostom becomes personal again, and describes how Paul was well-educated, while Peter was illiterate. Paul wanted to convert the Jews. There follow more chapters trying to make Paul and Peter compatible (.380). Much further on, in Chapter 16, a new and completely different solution is put forward: Paul reprimands Peter harshly on purpose, so that Peter has a lever on James (.384)! The theme is developed in Chapter 18: the reproaches are simulated, claims Chrysostom (.386). And, as if in case anything else fails, Chrysostom interprets the whole affair as part of an intricate plan against the Jews in Chapter 19 (.387). The pictorial detail of this idea is embroidered in Chapter 20. Peter does not want to disturb Paul's plan against Jews and therefore listens in silence (.388). In the end Chrysostom almost cannot help it that Paul comes out slightly on top of Peter - more intelligent, more fervent, more efficient in his task of spreading the Gospel.[10]

Chrysostom's argument is reproduced here at such length because it shows so many sides of his character. There is his unyielding loyalty that leads him into a tormenting conflict trying to reconcile his ideal, in this case Paul, with other facts he dare not challenge - in this case the spiritual integrity of Peter, with his peculiar human faults that had been

[10] In illud: *In faciem ei restiti* ; PG51-52.373-388; BV.579-601. The references in brackets throughout the discussion are to the appropriate columns in PG 51-52.

accepted by Christ himself. Apart from his spiritual anguish, it is also a good example of Chrysostom's mind working at lightning speed, rushing from one idea to the other. Here this mercurial flight takes the shape of almost a historical reconstruction, but if we assume similar speed and versatility for the development of his metaphors, it contributes to an explanation of their idiosyncrasies.

But Chrysostom's obvious distress in this context opens up some serious questions. Is his spiritual objectivity, the harmony of his faith endangered by his love for St. Paul? Is this love becoming unhealthy, projecting onto the Apostle what can really only be attributed to the Father and the Son? There are some disturbing statements. That Paul is a divine traveller may still be considered harmless.[11] But: *ὅταν δὲ Παῦλον εἴπω, τὸν Χριστὸν λέγω πάλιν* is somewhat too strong to be explained only by its context.[12] And Paul 'was so dear to the *basileus* of all, as even to share in unspeakable things with the Master of the Angels'.[13]

I do not want to comment any more on these quotes, being neither enough of a theologian nor sufficiently advanced in the faith to have a right to do so. Some of these statements have to be seen in the scriptural context they want to explain. A slightly different problem is that Paul is compared with the pagan god Apollo twice in the commentary on I Corinthians in the sense of being pitched against him - but this surely does not want to lift Paul onto divine level, it rather wants to illustrate the weakness of the pagan deities.[14]

Against this background, it is time to move on to examine how Chrysostom takes to the situation of Paul in imperial power, maybe the strongest image of the anti-*basileus* he invokes next to Julian the Apostate, and possibly the most important to him personally on account of his love for Paul. The juxtaposition of good and evil could not be greater in contrast. Chrysostom introduces Nero as 'this very famous man at the head of such a great empire who had the sad fame of discovering and inventing refinements of debauchery and shamelessness unknown before him'. He then relates Nero's grievance against Paul - he

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[11] C I Corinth. 20.6: PG61.168: BXVI.590.

[12] Adversus oppugnatores vitae monasticae 3.14: PG47-48.373: BI.181.

[13] C II Corinth. 12.4 (II Corinth. 6.10): PG61.486: LF27.155. Translation: 'when I say Paul, I really mean Christ'.

[14] C I Corinth. 8.2: PG61.70: BXVI.420 and again 8.3: PG.71.

had converted his favourite concubine. The consequences were incarceration and ultimately death. The story ends:

> Paul is an angel to whom all the world, for I do not speak only of those before our eyes, to whom all the world sings with glory...Nero, on the contrary, is for everybody the symbol of a barbarous monster.
> **Adversus oppugnatores vitae monasticae 1.3: PG47-48.323: BI.95**

The theme of the barbarous monster is inexhaustible, but even so the *basileus* is still good enough as a metaphor. Nero is compared to common thief, but in the same chapter Chrysostom describes Paul in terms derived from an earthly *basileus*:

> Comparable to a prince who, surrounded with light, mounts his throne and seats himself in the middle of his court, receives countless letters and messages from everywhere, so Paul, residing in his prison like in a palace, received and sent even more, the nations submit their affairs to his wisdom. He manages much more than the *basileus* himself, because he is charged with a much greater empire. There were not only the subjects of the Roman Empire, but all the barbarians, the land and the sea God has put in his hands.
> **De profectu evangelii 4: PG51-52.313-314: BV.486**

And there is also that image that will become even more important when Paul and Nero appear again in Constantinople. Again Nero is described as dark, hideous, as conducted to hell, but Paul stood close to the throne of the *basileus* of the universe, composed and splendid, enveloped by a glory that owes nothing to that of the angels, adorned with the martyr's crown.[15] The triumph of the Apostle appears in a wide range of texts. The magnificent procession of *basileis* and consuls (*ὑπάτους*) in carriages of gold, uniforms, shields and all of gold cannot hope to compare with Paul coming out of squalid prison.[16] And here is a full passage summing up and explaining these statements:

> A *basileus* is not so pleased with his diadem, as Paul gloried in his chains. And very justly. For a diadem affords just an ornament to the crowned head, but the chain is a much greater ornament as well as a security. The kingly crown often betrays the head it encircles, and allures innumerable traitors and invites them to the lust for rule. And in battle, this ornament is so dangerous that it must be hidden and laid aside. Hence *basileis* in battle, changing the outward dress, come thus into the midst of the combatants, so

[15] Adversus oppugnatores vitae monasticae 1.4: PG47-48.324: BI.96.

[16] C Ephesians 9.2; PG62.70B.

> much betrayal does there result from the crown, but the chain will bring nothing of the sort upon those who have it, but altogether the contrary, since if there be a war, and an engagement with demons, and the hostile powers, the man who is thus encompassed by holding up his chain repels their incursions.
> **Statues 16.6: PG49-50.165A-B**

Here the royal insignia are a hindrance, a dangerous object, a subject of lust rather than an asset. And Chrysostom does not distinguish whether they have only become so under the corrupting influence of human use, or whether that is their intrinsic value. There are some shorter references to Paul's superiority over anything connected with the *basileus*; again underlining this peculiar double purpose of this metaphor. Chrysostom uses the *basileus* as an anti-image to underline Paul's glory, and again uses it as the highest possible earthly term to show that Paul is aloof even from that. When describing the heavenly citizenship of Paul, the result is a truly royal image, 'much more splendid than the icons of the *basileis*'.[17] On the other hand, Paul is described by comparison with a statue:

> Imagine a golden statue, or even a thousand times more precious, a figure worthy of decorating heaven...and not fixed in one place, but moving from Jerusalem to Illyria, to Spain...
> **C I Corinth. 13.3: PG61.111: BXVI.488**

Paul as a victim of imperial power is a well-established *topos*, but there is an isolated piece of information involving power of a different kind: Chrysostom describes that Paul was maligned by many 'false apostles' among the Corinthians, obscuring his rapport with his own disciples.[18] Paul endangered by a web woven by false representatives of the faith could be seen as a parallel to the events that brought Chrysostom to the Synod of the Oak.[19] If Paul is above everything on earth - saints, men, *basileis* - the next task must naturally be to reconstruct how Chrysostom describes Paul in relation to heaven. On the one hand, the Apostle is described, just like Matthew, as one of those who inspire heaven in the believer: 'with Paul we fly to the very vaults of heaven, our soul becomes higher than the sun, and is above the moon'.[20] But Paul's own role in heaven is more important, especially as he visited it in his lifetime. Remarks like 'the blessed Paul, whose soul lifted itself to the

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[17] C I Corinth. 13.3: PG61.110-111: BXVI.487.

[18] In illud: *Utinam sustineretis modicum quid insipientiae meae* 3: PG51-52.303: BV.

[19] See Chapter 14.

[20] De poenitentia II.4: PG49-50.291: BIII.490.

heavens' are still non-committal and could apply to any saint.[21] But there is a more detailed reference to Paul in heaven connected with Galatians 6.14:

> 'The world is crucified for me, and I am crucified for the world'. He was personally lifted to the third heaven; on account of his love and devotion to Christ, he [lifts himself] not only to the third heaven, but above all heavens.
> **De compunctione - ad Stelechium 2: PG46-47.413: BI.249**

The image of the third heaven appears again:

> This man who was lifted to third heaven and was transported to paradise, to whom sublime mysteries were communicated and who enjoyed such closeness to God, was so modest to all these goods...
> **In s. Romanum martyrem I.1: PG49-50.607: BIV.335**

In the chapters on heaven, the numbers of heavenly spheres already caused confusion. Chrysostom flatly contradicts himself - 'no more than one heaven' was a repeated statement, while 'the heavens' crept into the flow of a description more than once. The third heaven only appears in connection with Paul and seems reserved for him, but in fact this supposedly new concept is simply a remnant of the Jewish tradition of seven heavens, seven levels of spiritual elevation that had been used - probably unawaredly - by Paul, and then in turn and without questions by Chrysostom. But even so, Paul does seem to be surrounded by a special sort of heaven. 'Martyrs now form part of the choir of Paul'.[22] That Paul obtains an elevated rank in heaven is implied by the following quote:

> Paul has obtained the celestial heritage, has become fellow citizen of the angels, has received the kingdom of God and savours the bliss of contemplating him face to face (I Corinth. 4.11-13). Having once lifted the eyes of his soul to heaven, filled with the beauty of that sight, he could not want to return to earth again. Just like an obscure poor man, after having passed his whole life in darkened and miserably reduced circumstances, then seeing a *basileus* resplendent with gold and gems, does not want to even think any more of his poor dwelling, and looks for ways and means in his power to remain close to that house [the palace] - thus the blessed Paul has considered heaven...and consecrated himself entirely to his heavenly home.

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[21] C Genesis 4.5: PG53-54.44: BVII.52.

[22] Adversus Judaeos 6.1: PG47-48.905: BII.452.

De compunctione - ad Demetrium 7: PG46-47?.404-405: BI.235-236

And that Paul qualifies the status and importance of heaven itself, and therefore must be above it, seems to be behind two otherwise different statements. Chrysostom cites Paul, Romans 8.38-39, and then continues to express his conviction that neither death nor life, angels nor any powers whatsoever can separate man from the divine love of Christ.[23] The weak position of angels in relation to humans is also expressed through Paul:

> When Paul says - we judge the angels, how much more then do we judge living things - does he not express a total difference between the things and angels?...The angels, by their nature, have no need of the things of the world...
> **C I Corinth. 16.3: PG61.133: BXVI.529**

The devaluation of heaven in favour of Paul must in this context be explained partly by Chrysostom's love for him, which is also greater than his love for heaven, and partly by the emphasis Paul himself puts on the direct connection bewteen Christ and man. However, different and more serious implications will be connected with the Pauline heaven in the different climate of Constantinople, and this applies also to Chrysostom's love for Paul itself. There is of course the argument that Paul only became so important to Chrysostom because it was in his maturity and during the years at Constantinople that he worked on the Epistles. But glimpsing through the preceding pages, it becomes obvious from what a variety of texts these statements were taken. There are for example quotations from 'Adversus oppugnatores vitae monasticae', among the earliest texts we have from Chrysostom. One therefore must conclude that Chrysostom's affinity for Paul was a personal impulse and not only a reaction to his source material. It was to be for life, and gained even greater importance under the stress of the years in Constantinople.

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[23] Adversus Judaeos I.7: PG47-48.855: BII.371.

Part III

Chrysostom in Constantinople

A Chronology of Chrysostom's Constantinopolitan Works[1]

397-98:

In principium Actorum homiliae 1-4; PG51-52.63-112; BV; first ones in Antioch, rest Constantinople.

398-399:

Adversus catharos; PG63.491-494; BXX.

De studio presentium; PG63.485-399; BXX.

Habita postquam presbyter Gothus homilia; PG63.499-510; BXX.

In illud: *Pater meus usque modo operatur* (John 5.17); PG63.511-516; BXX.

In templo s. Anastasiae homilia dicta; PG63.493-55; BXX.

De s. hieromartyre Phoca; PG49-50.699-706; BXX.

Postquam reliquiae martyrum homilia dicta; PG63.467-473; BXX; day before Praesente imperatore.

Praesente imperatore homilia dicta; PG63.473-478; BXX; in presence of emperor and court, day after Postquam reliquiae martyrum.

Quod frequenter conveniendum sit; PG63.461-468; BXX.

In illud: *Messis quidem multa* (Matthew 9.37; Luke 10.2); PG63.515-524; BXX; in the Church of the Holy Apostles.

399:

In dictum illud prophetae David: *Ne timueris cum dives factus fuerit homo* (Psalms 48.17) (Ne timueris); PG55.500-518; BX; around the time of Eutropius' fall.

Contra ludos et theatra, PG56.263-271; BX; catastrophic rains, small audience. Or Antioch - 'is this the city of the apostles?'

In epistulam ad Philippenses argumentum et homiliae 1-75 (C Philippians); PG62.177-299; W.C. Cotton, LF 14,1843 (T); Bonsdorff: 399.

In Eutropium eunuchum patricium; PG51-52.391-396; BVI; Day of Eutropius' fall and flight.

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[1] This is a counterpart to the chronology which opened Part II of the thesis. The same considerations, notes and conventions apply - see Note 1, p.36.

De capto Eutropio; PG51-52.395-414; BVI; Day after Eutropius' capture. On authenticity see CPG 4528.

400, beginning:

Cum Saturninus et Aurelianus; PG51-52.413-420; BVI.

400-401:

In Acta apostolorum homoliae 1-55 (Acts); PG60.13-583; J. Walker, J. Sheppard, LF 33+34, 1851+1852 (T).

402-403:

In epistulam ad Hebraeos argumentum et homiliae 1-34 (C Hebrews); PG63.9-237; T. Keble+ N. Barrow, LF 1877 (T).

402:

In epistulam ad Philemonem argumentum et homiliae 1-3; PG62.701-719; J. Tweed, LF 1843 (T).

In epistulam I ad Thessalonicenses homiliae 1-18 (C I Thess.); PG62.391-467; J. Tweed, LF 14, 1843 (T); Bonsdorff: 402.

In epistulam II ad Thessalonicenses homiliae 1-5 (C II Thess.); PG62.467-501; J. Tweed, LF 14, 1843 (T); Bonsdorff: 402.

403:

Sermo antequam iret in exsilium; PG51-52.427-436; BVI. This is a Latin version. See CPG 4396.

Sermo cum iret in exsilium; PG51-52.435-438. On authenticity: CPG 4397.

Sermo post reditum ab priore exsilio 1-2; 1 (Latin): PG52.439-442; 2:PG51-52.443-448; BVI; 403. Baur, p.230 n.27: No. 2 is not genuine. See CPG 4398 and CPG 4399.

403-404:

Epistula ad Innocentium papam. Chrysostom to Innocent. Innocent to Chrysostom. Honorius to Arcadius. Chrysostom to the imprisoned priests; PG51-52.527-538; BVI; Constantinople.

404, in exile:

Epistulae ad Olympiadem (Olympias); A.-M. Malingrey, *Lettres à Olympias*, SC 13, 1947 (IET); after 404.

406-407, in exile:

Ad eos qui scandalizati sunt; PG51-52.449-528; A.-M. Malingrey, *Sur la Providence de Dieu*, SC 79, 1961 (IET).

Epistula: Letter from Exile; A.-M. Malingrey, *Lettre d'Exil*, SC 103, 1964 (IET).

Constantinople, date uncertain:

Adversus ebriosos et de resurrectione; PG49-50.433-442; BIV; links with Genesis and Acts.

Adversus eos qui ad collectam non occurrerunt; PG51-52.170-186; BV; in summer.

Adversus eos qui non adfuerant; PG63.478-486.

De gloria in tribulationibus; PG51-52.155-164; BV; could also be Antioch.

De instituenda secundum deum vita; PG51-52.41-48; BV; doubted.

In epistulam ad Colossenses homiliae 1-12 (C Colossians); PG62.299-391; J. Ashworth, LF 14, 1843 (T).

In epistulam ad Galatas commentarius (C Galatians); PG61.611-682; W. Stoder, BKV 1936 (Chrysostom VIII) (T).

In epistulam I ad Corinthos argumentum at homiliae 1-44 (C I Corinth.); PG61.9-382; BXVI; J. Ashworth, LF 1839 (T); Bareille: Constantinople, Bonsdorff: 392.

In epistulam II ad Corinthos argumentum et homiliae 1-30 (C II Corinth.); PG61.381-611; BXVI; J. Ashworth, LF 1848 (T); Bareille: Constantinople, Bonsdorff: 392-393.

In illud: ***Propter fornicationes uxorem*** **(I Corinth. 7.2);** PG51-52.207-218; BV.

14 Set Ways in a Different Setting

Chrysostom's eventful years in Constantinople have attracted more attention than the comparatively peaceful days in Antioch. Historical research has been focused on his relationship with the palace in general and with other factions within the city. The history of Chrysostom's fall is well analysed in a number of up-to-date-publications, and appears in an even greater number of legends that ghosted through both Byzantine and Western texts for centuries. The ninth-century monk Walahfrid Strabo, tutor to Charles the Bald, makes this reference to Chrysostom:

> John Chrysostom was the first to enrich prayers with evening hymns for this reason especially: the Arians used to hold services outside the city. However, within the gates and through the arcades on Saturday and Sunday the assembly used to sing hymns antiphonally composed according to the Arian doctrine; and having done this for the greatest part of night, at dawn, singing antiphonally through the centre of the city, they passed through the gate and assembled at their church. They kept on doing this repeatedly as if to spite the orthodox assemblies, for they also sang this frequently: 'Where are they who call the one by three persons?'. Then lest the simple folk be taken in by songs of this kind, John instructed them to be occupied with evening hymns to obscure the activity of the Arians and strengthen the profession of the faithful. But then John's extremely useful endeavour was checked by turmoil and dangers. These things are recorded in this way in the tenth book of the Ecclesiastical History, which is called the Tripartita.
> Walahfrid Strabo, *Libellus de exordiis et incrementis quarundam in observationibus ecclesiaticis rerum*, Ch.26 [1]

Like most legends, there is historical truth behind this. Major ingredients of Chrysostom's fate at Constantinople are represented: the Arians resenting the fact that they had no church actually within the city, Chrysostom's flock, Chrysostom's views on ecclesiastical procedure, the city itself as both stage and catalyst of the conflict. This story has its root in a particular project on which Chrysostom cooperated with the Empress Eudoxia against the Arians. Eudoxia paid for silver candleholders to be used for torchlight processions during which hymns

[1] ed. V. Krause, MGH. Capit.ii (Hanover, 1897), p.505, l.26ff. Walahfrid's source: Cassiodorus, *Historia Ecclesiatica Tripartita*, Liber X.8.1-4. Ed. W. Jacob, prepared for publication by R. Hanslik, *CSEL* 71 (Vienna, 1952), p.595. I owe this fascinating extract to Alice L. Harting-Correa, who is preparing a translation and commentary of Walahfrid's *Libellus* as her doctoral thesis. She generously drew my attention to it and let me have her translation.

were sung, and her staff formed part of the choir.[2] It is uncanny how this remote text - remote both from us and from Chrysostom - suggests an atmosphere of tension. It is this tension involving everybody in the city and the emotions that ran high both pro and contra Chrysostom that obscure the issue of what happened for both contemporary and modern historians. But however complicated, it is necessary to reproduce at least a sketch of what happened here as a background to the subsequent analysis.

The election of Chrysostom to the see of Constantinople was not uncontested. His predecessor Nectarius had died in September 397. Theophilus of Alexandria, aware of the political importance of the see, put forward his own candidate Isidore - the only serious contestant among many entries, and worth mentioning because of Theophilus' role in Chrysostom's later fate. A decision was made on behalf of Emperor Arcadius by his omnipotent minister Eutropius. We do not know why he chose Chrysostom - maybe because of his reputation as a speaker, maybe because he was a dark horse politically. In a secret operation, Chrysostom was whisked away from Antioch. He was consecrated in Constantinople probably on 26th February 398.[3]

Constantinople obviously was different from Antioch in that it was not a large city whose existence as a metropolis can be traced back to the classical period. Indeed its forerunner Byzantion had been destroyed by Septimius Severus at the end of the second century, and its rise to prominence can only be traced back a mere 60 years. The rate of its growth can be gauged by the increasing numbers both of harbours and granaries and of water supply systems, like aquaeducts.[4] The relevance of this fast growth to Chrysostom lies in the resulting class structure of the city. There was an upper class of senators and administrators tied to imperial government and the city's infrastructure. There are also enormous numbers of imperial subjects flocking to the capital for various reasons. Socrates describes masses of fugitives coming into the capital in the second half of the 4th century, fleeing from starvation in Phrygia, and

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[2] Socrates VI.7-8: PG67.688-691; Sozomen VIII.8: PG67.1536-7.

[3] See Baur II, p.7 and p.10, and Dagron, *Naissance*, p.464-5 for a synchronisation of dates and sources. See Sozomen 8.2: PG67.1517 for Chrysostom's removal from Antioch.

[4] C. Mango, *Le Développement Urbain de Constantinople (IVe - VIIe siècles)*, Travaux et Memoires Du Centre de Recherche d'Histoire et Civilisation de Byzance, Collège de France, Monographies 2 (Paris, 1985) p.34-41.

similar waves of immigrants presented a continuous problem for the city.[5] These circumstances will have to be borne in mind when asking who reacted in what way to Chrysostom.

The topographical details of Constantinople at this time are less relevant to this study. But one should take note of the fact that Chrysostom's pastoral activity was focused mainly on the first Hagia Sophia, which was burnt down on the 20th of June 404 in the riots following Chrysostom's second exile.[6] Thus his preaching took place in immediate vicinity to both the palace and the hippodrome - both stages on which imperial self-presentation was enacted.

These considerations already introduce the hard fact both Chrysostom and his scholars continually come up against: nothing happens in Constantinople without interacting with the imperial presence. It is therefore necessary to briefly introduce the events surrounding Chrysostom's fate allegedly at imperial hands, his so-called 'Fall'. For generations of scholars Chrysostom was the victim of the vicissitudes of a self-important Empress Eudoxia and a weak Emperor Arcadius. However, work done more recently predominantly by Liebeschuetz and van Ommeslaeghe put these events into a very different light.[7]

Far from simply featuring a saintly bishop and a vindictive empress, Chrysostom's fall is a storm that breaks over the entire city, and at its centre revolve interdiocesan rivalries, competitive bishops, an unpopular archdeacon Serapion, Origenist monks, the inheritance of widows, a leper hospital, the Arian Gothic leader Gainas, silver statues of the Empress, the population of the city, a private tragedy concerning Eudoxia and Arcadius, and not least Chrysostom's own character, judgement and

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[5] Socrates IV.16: PG67.501. H.-G. Beck, "Großstadt-Probleme. Konstantinopel vom 4.-6. Jahrhundert", *Studien zur Frühgeschichte Konstantinopels*, ed. H.-G. Beck, Miscellanea Byzantina Monacensia 14 (Munich, 1973) p.8.

[6] G. Dagron, *Naissance d'une capitale. Constantinople et ses institutions de 330 à 451* (Paris 1974) p.399.

[7] The aforementioned old school of thought had its last great exponent in Fr. Chrysostomus Baur, whose biography of Chrysostom apart from this prejudice makes impressive reading. I want to mention an even earlier scholar who seemingly has been completely neglected: A. Thierry, "Saint Jean Chrysostome et l'Imperatrice Eudoxie", *Revue des Deux Mondes* 70 (1867) 273-321; 71 (1868) 73-131; 81 (1869) 257-294; 85 (1870) 586-627. Put together, these articles amount to an inspired and breathtaking account of the years 398-407, their only problem being that they adopt almost every detail from every available source and occasionally slip into the genre of the historical novel.

temper. Some of these elements are familiar, but it is especially in seeing how they all relate that new insights have been gained.

The reconstruction of what happened depends largely on establishing which sources are credible. Van Ommeslaeghe has done this. According to him, Palladius' 'Dialogue' is well informed, but biased,[8] leaving out some of the grievances against Chrysostom,[9] while Martyrius is more accurate and realistic, while being slightly hemmed in by his chosen format of a panegyrical obituary.[10] Another main source is analysed by T.E. Gregory, who finds that Zosimus thought very little of Chrysostom, mainly because of the unrest he spread among the people of Constantinople.[11] Yet more opinions are given, in a matter-of-fact fashion, in Socrates' Ecclesiastical History and in Sozomen's more sympathetic account, both discussed by van Ommeslaeghe.[12]

From these sources, it is Liebeschuetz and van Ommeslaeghe who have done most of the detective work. The focus of van Ommeslaeghe is clear from the articles cited in the notes above. Liebeschuetz identifies the factions involved and establishes the chronology of events.[13] The short *vademecum* that follows is compiled from these studies and sources.

In the beginning, Chrysostom's relations with the palace, if temperamental, were not bad. Empress and bishop both took a stance against Arianism, although Chrysostom committed some diplomatic blunders.[14] Chrysostom was so popular he even had the circus factions amongst his audience,[15] but while winning the people by his social

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[8] A.-M. Malingrey, *Palladios - Dialogue sur la vie de Jean Chrysostome*, I - SC 341, II - SC342 (both Paris 1988).

[9] F. van Ommeslaeghe, "Que vaut le témoinage de Palladius sur le procés de Jean Chrysostome", *Analecta Bollandiana* 95 (1977), 389-414.

[10] F. van Ommeslaeghe, "La valeur historique de la vie de S. Jean Chrysostome attribuée à Martyrius d'Antioche (Bibliotheca hagiographica graeca - Editio tertia, F. Halkin, Brussels 1957, 871)", *Studia Patristica* 12 (1975) 478-483.

[11] T.E. Gregory, "Zosimus V.23 and the People of Constantinople", *Byzantion* 43 (1973) 61-81. The role of the people of Constantinople is also explored by F. van Ommeslaeghe, "Jean Chrysostom et le peuple de Constantinople", *Analecta Bollandiana* 99 (1981) 329-349.

[12] F. van Ommeslaeghe, "Jean Chrysostome en conflit avec l'impératrice Eudoxie. Le dossier et les origines d'une légende", *Analecta Bollandiana* 97 (1979) 131-159.

[13] J.H.W.G. Liebeschuetz, "The Fall of John Chrysostom", *Nottingham Mediaeval Studies* 29 (1985) 1-31, and "Friends and Enemies of John Chrysostom", *Maistor - Classical and Byzantine Studies for Robert Browning*, Byzantina Australiensia 4 (Canberra, 1984) 85-111.

[14] Liebeschuetz, *Fall*, p.3 - 4.

[15] Gregory, *Zosimus*, p.71.

concerns, he antagonized his own clergy with his streamlining of resources and staff and his ascetic reforms.[16] Worse than that were the effects of his ideas about interdiocesan politics - the authority of the crypto-patriarch of Constantinople was not yet defined and the bishops of Asia resented his interference at the council of Ephesus in 401, although he was backed up by Arcadius.[17] He also antagonized the visiting bishop Severianus of Gabala by taking the wrong side in a clash between him and Chrysostom's archdeacon Serapion, who was arrogant and unpopular and maybe can be identified as Chrysostom's evil genius.[18] Around the same time, in 401, Chrysostom unwittingly laid the foundations to making an enemy of the powerful Theophilus of Alexandria by listening to a band of Origenist monks effectively outlawed by Theophilus in Egypt.

The hostile and antagonized churchmen found in Theophilus a figure to rally round, and together that party can be identified as the strongest group, working most consistently for Chrysostom's downfall. But any group wanting to achieve anything in Constantinople had to have imperial backing, and if possible also popular support. One therefore has to investigate what made imperial favour desert Chrysostom. The prejudice amassed against Eudoxia in this respect is founded on the assumption that she was vain and took offence at some of Chrysostom's remarks on the vanity of women. As in most prejudices, there is a kernel of truth in this and later in this chapter I will look at Chrysostom's familiar Pauline views of womanhood in the context of Constantinople. But the sources do not so much mention his general attitude as some specific instances where Chrysostom explicitly offended Eudoxia. Once Eudoxia is reported to have complained to Arcadius about Chrysostom's outspokenness.[19] One hagiographical source also describes how Eudoxia coveted and eventually appropriated the vineyard of a widow and was promptly compared to Jezebel by Chrysostom, a comparison that was repeated also in other circumstances.[20] This attack was, at the least, unwise because Chrysostom himself encouraged Olympias and other widows to focus

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16 Palladius V.100-127: SC 341.119-20, Dagron, *Naissance*, p.498.

17 Liebeschuetz, *Fall*, p.5.

18 Socrates VI.11: PG67.697; Liebeschuetz, *Fall*, p.7; Dagron, *Naissance*, p. 489.

19 Socrates VI.15: PG67.708-9, Sozomen VIII.16: PG67.1557, cited by Liebeschuetz, Fall, p.10.

20 Ommeslaeghe, Eudoxie, 135-136. Note 3 p.135: This hagiographical source is Theodore of Trimithont's Vita, BHG 872.

their largesse on the Great Church, with himself as intermediary, and immense sums on a different scale from a vineyard flowed into his charity projects this way.[21]

It was maybe small exasperating issues like these that made the palace not defend Chrysostom when the Synod of the Oak, composed of an impressive body of respectable, high-ranking bishops and churchmen, deposed Chrysostom for irregularities in filling his office. The deposition was in the end enforced through an imperial decision to exile Chrysostom. The people of the city clamoured on his behalf, but he was only called back a day later because Eudoxia and Arcadius interpreted a *θραύσις* in the imperial bedchamber as a sign of divine displeasure. [22]

Then, in the tense and precarious months following this first exile, Chrysostom preached against the festivities and games connected with the setting up of a silver statue of Eudoxia, who not unnaturally reacted angrily - whereupon Chrysostom turned round to compare her to Salome, asking for John's head.[23] Relations deteriorated, the ecclesiastical party was active, and the second exile followed amidst a rioting populace wanting to defend their bishop. These riots were violent, and brutal measures to liquidate the Chrysostomians followed, far beyond Eudoxia's death in 404.

The interesting point is that, as it happens, these significant exchanges, these specific instances are not mirrored in Chrysostom's surviving sermons, we mostly know of them through other sources.[24] One aspect that is also part of all these anecdotes and which needs to be examined is the idea that whenever Eudoxia was offended she only needed to persuade Arcadius to trigger a new wave of synodal trials. Arcadius tends to be portrayed as weak and incapable, unfortunately sandwiched between two more capable emperors at a time when the imperial office was expanding and evolving - like the Theodosii, Arcadius was a resident emperor in a palace that increasingly became the focus of both city and

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21 Dagron, *Naissance*, p.502-503.

22 scholars seem to agree on a miscarriage - e.g. Baur, vol. II, p.227.

23 Liebeschuetz, *Fall*, p.19; Sozomen VIII.20: PG67.1568; Socrates VI.18: PG67.716-7.

24 Ommeslaeghe, *Eudoxie*, p.154.

empire.[25] However, in the subsequent chapters I try to argue that Arcadius himself might also have felt a justified grievance against Chrysostom. Even in the case of Eudoxia one must admit that the insults Chrysostom aimed at her were sometimes substantial, if the sources are to be trusted. She certainly comes over as no more petulant and temperamental than he was outspoken and occasionally hotheaded.

If the church faction was strong against Chrysostom and the imperial stance tipped the scales, what was the counterweight? 'The people of Constantinople' is too easy an answer, unless one really means just that by it - the crowds in the streets, not the business and upper classes. As in Antioch, Chrysostom preached almsgiving and the spiritual superiority of poverty. This made him popular with the vast majority of city dwellers, who were indeed dependent on municipal social services and private charity. But this preoccupation of Chrysostom must also have antagonized those who enjoyed their wealth and position, and Chrysostom's intelligent panegyrist 'Martyrius' remarks on that.[26] It was these masses who rioted for him on the occasion of both his exiles. But the upper classes - composed not just of the usual oligarchy of a big city, but above all of the carriers of imperial administration, had another reason for hostility. Apparently Chrysostom had tried to open a leper hospital close to a residential district of the city.[27] Eudoxia is involved again, but, it seems, simply to represent the interests of this group of villa owners.

I think this last instance shows most clearly the nature of Chrysostom's problem. He failed to understand, or did not care about, or underestimated the delicate balance of interests in the imperial city and the resultant rules of coexistence. In Antioch the city's factions had been defined by their own programmes and by their relation to each other, the

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25 Dagron, *Naissance*, p.84, p.95. B. Baldwin, "Physical Descriptions of Byzantine Emperors", *Byzantion* 51 (1981) 8-21, on p.14 cites Philostorgius XI.3 who even mentions the sleepy, droopy eyes of Arcadius.

26 Ommeslaeghe, *Eudoxie*, p.150, citing Martyrius 480a-b. Ommeslaeghe, *Palladios*, p.412 mentions Martyrius' rendition of the reaction of the opposition: they said Chrysostom owed his popularity to black magic. Gregory, *Zosimus*, p.67-68 quotes Zosimus: 'the man was clever at demagogy'. R.T. Ridley, *Zosimus – Historia Nova*, Byzantina Australiensia 2 (Canberra, 1982), translates that as 'the man was skilled in controlling the irrational mob', Zosimus V.23, p.110-111. The original runs: *ἦν γὰρ ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἄλογον ἄχλον ὑπαγαγέσθαι δεινός*, ed. B.G. Niebuhr, *Zosimus - Historia Nova*, Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae (Bonn, 1837) p.278-9.

27 Ommeslaeghe, *Eudoxie*, p.151 cites Martyrius. Ommeslaeghe, *Palladios*, p.412: Palladius does not offer this evidence.

governor was not turned to for support, and that for example the orthodox under Meletius gained a victory over the party of Paulinus was mainly due to the general ecclesiastical politics of Theodosius, and perhaps partly to the standing of the venerable Meletius with the emperor. But in Constantinople everything was defined by its relation to the emperor, and the relationship to other groups was dependent on one's standing with the palace. Chrysostom's failure to comprehend this really lies at the root of all the opposition that formed against him - also that within the church. The palace was clearly disposed to accept him when he first came. Tragically, his very spirituality moved him to prepare his own downfall. In the subsequent chapters, this emerges quite strikingly from incidental remarks as well as from patterns of preaching relating specifically to the God-*basileus* metaphor.

After introducing the events themselves, one should examine how they affect Chrysostom. His attitude to his position, his difficulties with it, have been described above. What matters in connection with this particular investigation is that he came into contact with two specific versions of empire and *basileus*. For one thing, he had to become involved in ritual and ceremonial which, although bordering on liturgy, stood for worldly rule. This ceremonial one must not assume to be identical with that one finds in the 6th century, let alone with the celebrated escalations of the 10th century. But it would have evolved enough from late Roman times to manifest a clearly Byzantine Empire.[28] With this, Chrysostom could come to terms. In the complex concepts involved in the notion of empire one can expect him to emphasize the role of responsibility the emperor has to fill where faith and the fate of the empire are concerned.

It is precisely because of this trend in Chrysostom's thinking as regards the perennial ingredients of imperial ideology - together with the conception he had of his own task - that the current version of 'empire' could not please him in the long run. Inmates of both palace and church were not ideal enough for him. He considered superfluous most of the material trappings at least of the ecclesiastical offices, if not of the palace. At least, one should see them as standing for the concept of immaterial glory, and should not allow them to be objects of pride,

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[28] Dagron, *Naissance*, p.87, and on p.90 he states that under the Theodosians and Arcadius 'toute sortie de l'empereur est une procession'.

envy, greed. Unfortunately, he was, at least among the powerful, in the minority with his opinions.

Once open conflict about these points started, Chrysostom would have reason to think that the real emperor did not live up to the ideal. It is tragic that in Arcadius he indeed met one of the less capable of emperors. In short, the entire set-up at Constantinople must have been far too human, far too ordinary in its vices to elicit any respect from Chrysostom. How did these experiences affect his employment of a court-heaven parallel? After having suffered difficulties, even serious harm at the hands ultimately of an earthly ruler, could anyone be prepared to use earthly rulers as a metaphorical translation of divine properties?

Whatever the outcome, these facts are reason enough to start investigating the evidence found for Constantinople separately and with a fresh approach, and not to assume straightaway that the conclusions found for the Antioch period will be found in Constantinople as well. But something one should keep in mind surely must be Chrysostom's definition of metaphor - one must not forget that he is still using royal details as a convenient language to express something else. It is to be remembered that he himself never identified the realities of earth with those of heaven.

That Chrysostom had anything like an ideal conception of the ruling of the empire may be qualified also by the fact that his home town Antioch had seen various and frequently not exemplary emperors within its walls. Surely he never had a rose-spectacled view of earthly emperors that are perfect by default, his attitude towards Julian the Apostate shows that to an extreme. But the question is whether the imperfections will not strike him more when he finds himself not philosophically aloof from, but at loggerheads with them. How he reacts to imperial reality will form the first line of enquiry.

But still one should remember that Chrysostom's main opinions, spiritual beliefs, and above all his method of thinking and arguing were explored in the immense bulk of his Antioch output, and that in these respects it is questionable whether one can reasonably expect much change. The interest of this part of the study lies in the enquiry into what happened

to Chrysostom's numerous versions of the God-*basileus* metaphor under the influence of the events in Constantinople. Not only can one observe the application of his various metaphorical habits and measure this against their application in Antioch, one can also try to investigate how conscious Chryostom was of the content of his staple metaphors and how the significance of this content changed with the new environment, the imperial city.

When speaking of the period in Constantinople, one has to discern three phases. There are the first few years from 397 to 402-3, when Chrysostom could pursue his task in relative peace. He had the chance to adjust to the new type of congregation: city dwellers like his flock in Antioch, but in a city where everybody had to take a stance towards its formative imperial element. It remains to be seen whether Chrysostom realized this difference, and also whether he realized the fact that here he was not 'simply' a preacher, but was responsible for a whole episcopal office with its staff which, alongside its mode of operation, had been established before Chrysostom came.

The next phase is the conflict with the palace itself, and the descriptions of the years 403 and 404 give the impression of tensions erupting. The factual reasons for this eruption have already been reconstructed; in the frame of this study the investigation is how it was prepared and expressed in Chrysostom's metaphorical habits. Finally, there is Chrysostom in exile from 404 to 407, and the question in this context will be whether and how his patterns of metaphor reeled under and then recovered from this shock of expulsion.

While these periods can be listed in clear sequence, it does not seem advisable to treat the evidence in as rigid a chronological framework. There are, unfortunately, not such riches of texts as for the Antioch period. Also, because of the sequence of momentous events, dating is crucial, but for some of the most important texts the date and context cannot be established beyond doubt. The approach, therefore, has to be a very flexible one. It is probably still best to sort the evidence into thematic categories, while being attentive to the texts it was taken from, their dating and their context. Thus the first chapter immediately following this introduction will firstly collate all statements made involving the *basileus* in a context of imperial presence - in other words,

very public, intentional statements. It will then explore the general use of the *basileus* and the God-*basileus*, court-heaven metaphor, in a variety of texts, context, and at different levels of intention.

What was Chrysostom's own attitude towards the move to Constantinople? There seems little evidence referring to that question, although I did not specifically look for it. At least once Chrysostom describes Constantinople as the centre of the empire in positive terms. He describes what happened when death approached St. Meletius: the *basileus* was 'moved by God' to call him to the capital. During his subsequent journey many could see him and benefit from him. Chrysostom then describes Constantinople as a scene for the saint's arrival: it is full of people, attracted by the grandeur of the city and the residence of the emperor. He especially mentions the great number of bishops there, often on invitation, and Chrysostom sees this as a positive sign, an expression of the fact that the wars between emperors and the Church were finally over. He even lists the great number of administrators in the capital, though rather indistinctly: satraps, consuls, and toparchs.[29] On the whole, this presents an optimistic, even idealistic, though not overwhelmingly well-informed view of the capital, which already contains some of the aspects of life in the city that were to cause Chrysostom some trouble.

It is advisable at this point to take stock of some of Chrysostom's most persistent attitudes that evolved in his time at Antioch using texts from that time, even if they do not necessarily relate to the *basileus* in any way. His interaction with the audience has already been described in connection with his preaching activity in Antioch. In Constantinople he also reminds the audience not to laugh in church, but on occasion he apologizes for his harsh reprimands, something that was not observed in Antioch.[30] It seems to indicate that his audience had more pride than the flock of the Great Church of Antioch and would not accept everything. Because it is relevant to the relation with this flock, and a useful reminder Chrysostom's attitude to and thoughts about metaphor should be recalled by a reflection on human limitations which also contains a very vague qualification of the powers of St. Paul:

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[29] De s. Meletio Antiocheno 3: PG49-50.518: BIV.194.

[30] C Hebrews 15.4: PG63.122.

> Everywhere indeed a reverential mind is requisite, but especially when we say or hear anything of God: Since neither can tongue speak nor thought hear anything suitable to our God. And why speak I of tongue or thought? For not even the understanding which far excels these, will be able to comprehend anything accurately, when we desire to utter anything concerning God.....For many of our conceptions about God, we are unable to express, as also many things we express, but have not strength to conceive of them. As for instance: that God is everywhere, we know; but how, we no longer understand....And there are some things which we may not even speak - as for instance, my thought conceives but cannot utter.....even Paul is weak and does not put out his explanations with exactness...
> **C Hebrews 2.1: PG63.19-20: LF 1877.18-19**

Chrysostom's many sided attitude to the *basileus* as a both positive and negative concept can be found expressed in one simple extract from Antioch. Chrysostom describes how Babylas would rather die than giving up the rank he holds with *ὁ μέγας βασιλεὺς*. The real *basileus* - in this case Julian - is portrayed negatively, while courtly terminology is used in the same breath to describe God, and probably this is intentional, as a sharp reminder who the true *basileus* is.[31]

An important area in which to ascertain Chrysostom's opinion while he still lives in Antioch must be that of luxurious city life, and of women - both of which have often been considered primarily to have caused the crisis at Constantinople. Chrysostom certainly could be stern. He reminds his audience that also in this world the soul can be severely chastized:

> Do not speak about the sumptuous table the rich man patronizes, his silken clothes, the numerous slaves...enter his conscience, and you will witness the evil tumult of the sins he committed, the worries and storms incessant, you will see the soul mount the royal throne in some way, rallying witnesses and evidence like a judge...
> **De Lazaro I.11: PG47-48.979: BII.566-67**

He subsequently lists all the sins and threats against virtue which the rich especially are prey to. And another Antioch staple was that Chrysostom would exhort his flock not to take part in the games in the hippodrome, and with the activities at Daphne in general.[32] Here, in his own words, is his motivation for these harangues:

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[31] De s. Babyla contra Julianum et gentiles 11: PG49-50.550: BIV.244.

[32] as in C Genesis VII.1 and at the end of VI.6; PG53-54.62; BVII.82.

> On what account then do I say these things? Because it behoves you to purge off all affections for riches....Has a rich man ever entered here [in church], or even a rich woman? She does not regard how she shall hear the oracles of God, but how she shall make a show, how she shall sit with pomp, how with much glory, how she shall surpass all other women in the costliness of her garments, and render herself more dignified both by her dress, and look, and gait. And all her care and concern is: Did such a woman see me? Did she admire me? Is my beauty handsomely set off? And not only about this does she care, but that her garments may not rot, nor be rent; and about this is all her care. In like manner also the rich man enters, meaning to exhibit himself to the poor man, and to strike him with awe by the garments which are about him, and by the number of his slaves. And they stand round, driving off the crowd.
> **C II Thess. 3.3 (II Thess. 2.3): PG62.483-484: LF14.487**

This introduces 'woman' as a main target for admonition. Chrysostom preaches against women and ambition very early in his career.[33] He sadly observes 'how the women of today are different from Sarah and care only for luxuries '.[34] He again admonishes women and considers even crossing the street in a group without male supervision as shameless.[35] But there could be a different side to these remarks. Sometimes Chrysostom's attitude reveals itself as protective of women, as if he wanted to preserve them from risks in a male-dominated society. He impresses on his flock that in defiling a woman, one also defiles God. A harlot may have no husband, but God will avenge her shame. And this crime is the same, Chrysostom points out, whether you defile a *basilissa* or a slave. And he continues:

> If one who was thought worthy of the purple, and of infinite honour from the *basileus*, and was commanded to live suitably to the honour, should go and defile himself with any woman, whom has he insulted? Her, or the *basileus* who gave him everything? She is indeed insulted too, but not equally.
> **C I Thess 5.2: PG62.425: LF14.389**

At the same time, Chrysostom, in his endeavour to keep women in the moral safety of their homes, credits them with occasionally more wisdom in domestic affairs than their husbands command.[36] On the whole, there are many elements in Chrysostom's view of women that can be described as essentially Pauline. He states in the strongest terms that if

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[33] De sacerdotio 3.9: SC272.159.

[34] C Genesis 41.5: PG53-54.382: BVII.611.

[35] De Lazaro 5.2; PG47-48.1020; BII.632-633.

[36] In illud: *Propter fornicationes uxorem* 3.4: PG51-52.230-231: BV.348.

a man covers his head, which should be bare as he is the image of God, and takes a woman's garment it is tantamount to discarding a diadem and taking up the garment of a slave.[37] And he supports Paul in the timeless tenet 'let woman be silent'.[38]

It is with these views that he enters the complex society of Constantinople. All these statements were taken from Antioch texts, they present Chrysostom's set opinions, and thus show that his famous admonitions in Constantinople were not an immediate reaction to the conditions and personalities he found there. But to those familiar with his fate in the imperial city, many of these quotes presage issues that are found at the centre of the argument about what precisely caused his fall. The question will be in what way the routine topics of his sermons and especially his habit of using terminology based on the *basileus* and his environment contributed to this fall .

[37] C I Corinth. 26.5: PG61.218: LF9.359.

[38] C I Corinth 37.1 (I Corinth.14.36): PG61.315-316: LF9.520.

15 Chrysostom and the Emperor

Chrysostom's attitude to '*basileus*' during his time at Antioch had been varied. No enthusiastic panegyrics were directed to any ruler living or dead. On the other hand, for reasons Chrysostom explained when describing the proper use of metaphor, earthly rulers were often employed to make clear the proper behaviour believers should adopt, or to interpret divine decisions. In this group one also found lengthy descriptions of what can only have been imperial ceremonial witnessed in Antioch between the 340s and 370s. What changes would one expect with Chrysostom's move to Constantinople? From outer circumstances: an increase in detail and correctness in descriptions involving imperial ceremonial. An increase in attention to liturgy and numerous church staff. An even greater role played by the city environment than in Antioch. There are also circumstances peculiarly affecting Chrysostom. When first approaching the problem of Chrysostom in Constantinople, one expects to find the following in his works: a questioning of royal/imperial competence in matters spiritual and of the splendours of ceremonial, and a very earnest refusal of the private luxuries traditionally surrounding the bishop of Constantinople. One might also suppose a heightened awareness of the presence of intrigue, powerplay and factions. As some Antioch evidence shows, Chrysostom was never quite uninformed or idealistic in this respect, but unfortunately his awareness of the existence of 'intrigue' as such did not keep him from falling victim to it in Constantinople.

Some of these expectations, partly heightened by the secondary literature on Chrysostom, will undoubtedly be fulfilled. Simply having them, though, does not prepare the scholar for what he will find in the sermons held at Constantinople. Looking at these texts with Chrysostom's use of '*basileus*' in mind, the most interesting category of references seems at first to be formed by all direct addresses to the emperor and/or the empress, or references made in a context when either or both were definitely present. These occasions are comparatively few in number, but they arguably form the most famous and best known portion of Chrysostom's Constantinopolitan works. As such they frequently have been studied before - here they are introduced again, the

precise statements about the palace and the *basileus* being put under a magnifying glass. The earliest sermons where Chrysostom speaks directly to the rulers are those held in connection with the very public occasions, the translation of the relics. The rulers are described as pious examples to the multitude at the arrival of the relics of S. Phocas from Pontus:

> And see, the emperors take part with our procession. What excuse would the simple man have, if even the emperors leave the royal halls behind? That is the power of the martyrs: not only everyday men, but also the heads encircled with diadems are taken in their net.
> **De s. hieromartyre Phoca 1: PG49-50.699: BIV.475**[1]

But it is not just the exhibition of piety by the rulers, it is above all the discarding of the symbols of wealth and power that elates Chrysostom. At another and grander translation, when relics were carried from Hagia Sophia to the martyrion of St. Thomas at Drypia outside the city, he describes himself as transported, as not touching earth any more. This seems to be an expression of the kind of religious sentiment that characterized the occasion, and which delights Chrysostom:

> The rulers themselves mingle with simple people, leaving behind...the lictors and guards. And why talk of women and princes, when she herself who wears the diadem and the purple will not for an instant be separated from the relics during the entire procession, following the saints like a serving maid, carrying in her hand the relic and the veil in which it is wrapped...exposing herself to the gaze of all the people - it is so good that the people could see her as the most intimate courtiers can see her. Her unquenchable love for the saints...
> **Postquam reliquiae martyrum 1: PG63.467: BXX.479**

At this point Chrysostom introduces a favourable comparison between the piety of Eudoxia and that of his ideal biblical *basileus*, David. In the further course of the homily he again turns to describing the power of the martyr's relics:

> If we lift our eyes to the heavenly vault, we behold the moon and the stars with which [the sun] is surrounded: on earth, it is the

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[1] Baur II, p.35-36 points out that this homily dates not from 403-404, as Montfaucon thought, but has to be seen in the context of the very first time in Constantinople, when Chrysostom and the palace cooperated well. - The homily is discussed by N. Gussone, "Adventus - Zeremoniell und Translation von Reliquien. Victricius von Rouen, De laude sanctorum", *Frühmittelalterliche Studien* 10 (1976), 125-33, on p.131-32. He sees it as a panegyric "zum Lob der Epiphanie des Herrschers", the speech is part of the ceremonial. The reference to this discussion was given by M. McCormick, *Eternal Victory. Triumphal Rulership in Late Antiquity, Byzantium, and the Early Mediaeval West* (Cambridge, 1986), p.331, n.9 in the context of a discussion of the element of *adventus* in relic translations.

multitude of the faithful with the empress in their midst, shining more than the moon herself....what shall we admire in her? Her zeal, burning hotter than fire, her faith more durable than a diamond, her modesty and humility superior to that of all others? Leave aside the insignia of supreme power, the diadem and all these exterior trappings, she has substituted the hairshirt for the purple, and became the more radiant for it. One has seen well enough the *basilides* wearing the royal cloak and the diadem, but having no other glory than what is imbued by this apparel: she appeared to us clad in this novel beauty, upholding this new trophy....you are like the door to all the churches, you employ the sovereignty of down here to conquer the celestial kingdom. ...she [Mary] is surrounded with liberated Jews, you have the church herself for a crown; she guiding but one nation speaking but one language - you, enlisting peoples without number speaking thousand different languages. The choirs you have formed sing the concert in Latin, Syriac, Greek, Barbarian, the songs of David. These peoples that are so different have nothing but one lyre, that of David, and surround you with their prayers...
Postquam reliquiae martyrum 2-3: PG63.469-472: BXX.480-85

One should note the comparison between Eudoxia and Mary, Queen of the Heavens in this homily. But it is obvious how the value of imperial accoutrements is deflated even in this lyrically positive statement about the empress. At the same time, the parallel between earthly rule and celestial kingdom is upheld and described, the latter being an intensification of the former. What applies to the empress and her insignia during the procession is also valid for the emperor on the day after:

Praise be to God - that the power of the martyrs is great ...yesterday it compelled the whole city along with the empress, today the emperor with his army gives us an example of profound piety....What excites our admiration is not just that the emperor has come, it is that he has given proof of such a great zeal, that he has obeyed not necessity, but the impulse of his soul (γνώμη), not for bestowing a favour, but for receiving grace: he who distributes his benefactions throughout the world has come to throw himself at the feet of the saints, praying for the true goods. Also, doffing the diadem, and his guards, following his example, putting down either their sword belts or their lances, they all together approached without any apparel, with profound humility, as if they would pass from earth to heaven, where these human honours, all this pomp, all these external decorations cannot enter...
Presente imperatore 1: PG63.473: BXX.486

Again it is that power of martyrs even over rulers that is emphasized, which is reminiscent of the constellation Babylas - Julian that loomed so large in Antioch. However, a translation of relics in the late fourth century was in itself an expression of imperial power, it was announced by the palace through the bishop and had the characteristics of an

imperial *adventus*.[2] The question must be to what extent Chrysostom was aware that this event in that sense belonged to the sphere of imperial self-representation, and that the concept of disinterested spirituality need not necessarily apply. Baur draws attention to the fact that Chrysostom's language at these occasions was very restrained compared with panegyrics by Libanius and Themistius, which fits in with the clear emphasis on the inferiority of earthly rule to spiritual power noticed in the statements above.[3] It seems that the ceremonial importance of his homilies in this context was lost on Chrysostom.

Chrysostom expresses very similar feelings on that other great public occasion of his early years in Constantinople, which was of a very different hue: the fall and the capture of the eunuch Eutropius. There, the atmosphere was not one of religious festivity, but was tense and charged with both aggression and anxiety - not unlike the situation in which Chrysostom delivered his homilies after the riot of 387 in Antioch:

> Yesterday, when they came from the palace for him wanting to drag him off by force, he was there clinging to the holy vessels with a face like death, and it is the same today - by the grinding of his teeth, the shaking of all his members, his hushed voice and his slow speech it is possible to apprehend the terror of his soul.
> **In Eutropium eunuchum patricium I.2; PG51-52.393; BVI.7**

And the image of the *basileus* he gives in these sermons is close to the idealized rendition of the wrathful, but distressed Theodosius. The aim is again to put public pressure on the *basileus* to be merciful, to let forgiveness win over. Here the ulterior aim is to sway public opinion, which is against Eutropius, into more Christian feelings:

> Now that the stone has become...fertile soil, let us go farther and make it produce abundant fruits of mercy, let us present a rich bunch of friendly feelings, let us fall before the *basileus*, but even more let us call for the loving God, to soothe the wrath of the *basileus*, to give him a soft heart, so that he may grant us complete mercy.... Now the emperor is granting pardon for the real injuries done to him, and you, who have nothing like that to pardon, persist in your wrath?
> **In Eutropium eunuchum patricium I.4-5: PG51-52.396: BVI.11-12**

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[2] See also previous note, and see M. McCormick, *Eternal Victory*, p.200 for the announcement of relic translations, and p.331, n.9 for the parallels to *adventus*. See p.220.

[3] Baur II, p.36.

Good Christians should pray, and should implore the *basileus* to respect the sanctuary, and should be an influence of moderation on imperial wrath however legitimate. In this context, Chrysostom uses another element which is also familiar from Antioch, where the church-mother soothed the child that was frightened by the stern *basileus*-father:

> A few days ago the church was besieged like a battlefield, an army was there with burning eyes, the olive branch was not offered, the swords were drawn...The palace gates were disturbed, but the church was secure...
> **De capto Eutropio 1: PG51-52.397**

And subsequently Chrysostom enlarges on the strength of the Church, which may be partly wishful thinking in view of the military presence. While still trying to solicit an imperial pardon, he at the same time also points out the weakness of power and station, and describes the emptiness of such human institutions, weaving into his argument the imperial topography of the hippodrome at Constantinople:

> ...where are the crowns...where is the hum of the city and the jubilations of the hippodromes and the flatteries of the spectators?...where are the false friends?...where are those who used to make way for you in the agora?
> **In Eutropium eunuchum patricium I.1: PG51-52.391-92: BVI.4-6**

The explosiveness of this passage may be defused by the context - Chrysostom here refers to the lust for glory and power exhibited by Eutropius, not by the *basileus*. But two days later, there is no doubt about the implications of his speech, which apparently responds to some of the audience having departed in mid-sermon, or not having come back from previous sermons:

> In the shipwreck of others I want to make a safe port for you. When one sees all around the soldiers and swords, when the city is on fire, when the diadem is not strong, when the purple is slighted, when madness rules all, where are all the riches?
> **De capto Eutropio 3: PG51-52.398-99: BVI.16-17**

This clearly is less than flattering to Arcadius, it more or less states that he is an incapable ruler. It is noteworthy that Chrysostom with this remark tries to convince the - no doubt by this time highly emotional - population of Constantinople walking out on him. The unintentional

meaning of his speech therefore was probably not lost on anybody. In the further course of this passage he again describes the church as a sanctuary, and not as co-operating with the empire. The emperor is portrayed as helpless. Later in the same homily there is a complicated comparison involving a *basilissa*, the *basileus*, the church and heaven, but in such a way that it is very hard to distinguish whether *basilissa* and *basileus* are employed in a positive or a negative sense. Chrysostom at least gives the warning 'what I say is not to be taken in a material sense.' In the end, he puts the *basileus* in the following context: 'Distinguish, then, between that which truly belongs to divinity and that which results from the dispositions of the divine plan...'.[4] All this pours out in the full flight of a sermon, which is after all a public speech rather than a written commentary or a letter directed to a single person, and these statements, if remembered by contemporaries, go some little way to explaining why the palace could have a reason to terminate Chrysostom's work as bishop only a few years later.[5]

It is those few years later, at the for him personally most important public occasion involving Chrysostom, that he gives his emotional sermon after the return from his first exile.[6] During this sermon he at some points goes beyond the qualified and limited imperial image he presented above. There, imperial power was described as questionable and imperial insignia were deflated. In 'Post Reditum...', the Church and Chrysostom seem to gain correspondingly:

> Yes, take me out of the city, and you will see the affection of the church for its shepherd,...you will see the splendour of my diadem, the abundance of our treasures...the general is distant, but

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4 De capto Eutropio 9; PG51-52.403-404; BVI.25.

5 This is the same Eutropius who was responsible for Chrysostom's appointment to the see of Constantinople - see p.206. After first granting him sanctuary, Chrysostom does not defend him to the last, Eutropius is taken and killed - Baur II, p.39. This change of mind may perhaps be explained by the fact that Eutropius had been unpopular, and the passage from In Eutropium eunuchum patricium I.1 cited on the previous page shows that also Chrysostom disapproved of his lust for power.

6 Between the fall of Eutropius and Chrysostom's exile Constantinople was shaken by the revolt of the general Gainas, leader of the Goths. Liebeschuetz identifies Chrysostom's involvement with the Goths and Gainas as another, and very important, public situation. It does not appear here because it is not reflected in Chrysostom's sermons, and has no relevance to the discussion of the *basileus*. Chrysostom acted as a negotiator and visited Gaines at his camp in Thrace. With the promises he made to Gainas, which involved the banishment of several high officials from Constantinople, he himself took the first steps to establish a powerful party interested in his downfall - J.H.W.G. Liebeschuetz, *Barbarians and Bishops. Army, Church and State in the Age of Arcadius and Chrysostom* (Oxford, 1990) p.111-124. This book, which would have been central to this study, was published too late to be emulated.

> the soldiers stand armed....When the *basileus* enters here, he doffs his diadem...and leaves the symbols of his power at the door...
> **Post reditum ab priore exsilio II.2: PG51-52.444: BVI.78-79**

The last sentence must be seen in the context of an exhortation aimed at his flock to come to church in a humble state of mind. The splendour of the church ceremony is of greater importance than that of imperial power, and this is expressed by the emperor's removal of his diadem on entering the church. The pious empress is reintroduced immediately after the statement above, when Chrysostom illustrates just how earnestly the people of Constantinople wanted him back:

> The agora was nothing but one church...for whom did you [his flock] not set your example? Even the empress herself is taken in the choir with you, for her zeal was not concealed. I do not say this to flatter the empress, but to do justice to piety...
> **Post reditum ab priore exsilio II.3-4: PG51-52.444-446: BVI.79-81**

Subsequently, Eudoxia is called 'pious' again, it is described how she threw herself at the emperor's feet, and 'like Abraham demanded Sarah, she demanded back a man' - Chrysostom himself. On the whole Eudoxia emerges as more pious than the *basileus*.[7] In all these passages, it should be realized that this situation was very emotional for Chrysostom, which might lead to exaggerations. That he never consciously had in mind to attack imperial rule is testified by some minor details in his sermons - for example, an affectionate remembrance of Theodosius I, which, however, expresses that piety ranks above imperial insignia:

> We are much indebted to the blessed Theodosius, not because he was emperor, but because he was pious, not because he was clothed in purple, but because he had Christ for a mantle that would not fade, because he wore the armour of justice.... Differently from other *basileis*, he owes his triumph not to his soldiers, the honour is his own, due to nothing but his faith.
> **Adversus catharos 1: PG63.491: BXX.516-517**

There is also the fact that in official business, and in a situation where he had no reason to love Arcadius, he refers to him in the usual reverential

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[7] I only sparingly quote from this text, Post reditum ab priore exsilio II, as its authenticity is somewhat doubtful. Post reditum ab exsilio I: PG52.439-442 only survived in Latin, in two versions, and is fragmentary. Post reditum ab priore exsilio II: PG52.443-448 is a Greek version, considered authentic by all the editors, but Baur II, p.230, n.26, 27 rejects it on the basis of his opinion on the internal evidence. As the details of Chrysostom's first exile are not entirely clear, the analysis of this internal evidence does not lead to clear conclusions.

I think there are two levels in this long description. There are on the one hand the facts of an imperial triumphal adventus. On the other hand there is a conditional - if the *basileus* 'would' even go further than usual and let the people share his palace... so at this stage, not only is Chrysostom apparently not too disappointed with the real *basileus*, but he also lifts his description from observed facts to a level that is somewhat ideal. And there are instances of the *basileus* apparently still being thought fit to be the metaphorical counterpart of God/Christ in heaven. Chrysostom explains that 'down here' athletes and contestants do not receive their wreaths in the arena, but are asked up to the imperial box, just as the believer receives his prize in heaven.[10] So where the emperor is - somewhere 'up' -, that space is comparable to heaven? - 'Circus' is not unknown as a *topos* in Chrysostom's homilies, in Antioch it was the Olympic Games and the 'theatre', as well the stadium or hippodrome that stood for all circensian reprehensibility.[11] In Constantinople, *the* hippodrome appears as a place of evil. A man who was to be married the next day was killed by chariots in the hippodrome - Chrysostom describes this in such graphic detail that one could be pardoned for thinking that he himself was an eye witness - maybe this is an indication of how fast and accurately news travelled in the city. This unfortunate accident is exploited by Chrysostom against the hippodrome as a symptom of its immorality.[12]

Apart from the hippodrome, the city itself figures. Chrysostom describes how good it feels to leave church 'in a frame of mind to disdain all human affairs', especially in a city where richness and political fortune are so shortlived, and where the bootlickers surrounding a successful man one day feed on his carrion the next. Chrysostom urges his flock to 'penetrate the thinking, get into the conscience of that man', which also shows his compassion amid all exhortation.[13]

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[10] C Philip. 13.2: PG62.272C.

[11] See p.47-48 in the chapter on the Antiochene background for the attitude of churchmen towards the theatre and games.

[12] In illud: *Pater meus usque modo operatur* 1: PG63.512: BXX.550. Again one must draw attention to the thought that the Fathers were against the circus because it was a breeding place of anarchy and uncontrollable mass frenzy.

[13] In dictum illud prophetae David: *Ne timueris cum dives factus fuerit homo* I.2: PG55.502: BX.62-63.

The atmosphere of ambition and pride is also the subject of a little scene set in the streets of the city. Chrysostom harangues the Constantinopolitans for their pompous behaviour in the agora, snubbing each other, and pushing the less privileged around to make way. He reminds his listeners that when God has given man the honour to be admitted to heaven, to sit on the royal throne, it is ludicrous not to 'pass the time of day with man'. And he asks what excuse anyone can have for fancy harness for his horse insensible to such ornament, 'who sees Christ tortured with hunger', obviously referring to the poor in the streets.[14] Chrysostom continues this exhortation for some time, and then reinforces his argument with a surprising element: one should not tempt the servants, mostly from barbarous and inferior nations, with such a display of riches! Was this Chrysostom's own conviction, or was it simply some point he thought could penetrate to the die-hard nouveaux-riches he addressed this sermon to? The agora, at any rate, also fulfils the very different role of acting as a barometer both for the Christian spirit of the age and for the effect of that spirit on the ruling power. The following statement was made in connection with the story of the Eunuch of Candace (Acts 8.27ff.):

> *Εἰ γὰρ οἱ νῦν ἄρχοντες, πιστοί τε ὄντες καὶ ταπεινοφρόειν παιδευόμενοι καὶ οὐδὲν βάρβαρον ἔχοντες, οὐκ ἄν ἕλοιντο, οὐ λέγω ἀγνῶτα καὶ ξένον, ἀλλὰ τῶν γνωρίμων τινὰ ταχέως ἐπ' ἀγορᾶς αὐτοῖς συγκαθίσαι ...*
> **In illud: *Messis quidem multa* 5; PG63.522; BXX.567**[15]

In the passages assembled in the preceding pages elements of Chrysostom's new daily life, in such proximity to imperial ceremonial, stand out clearly. The *adventus* procession, the triumphal return from campaign is described in detail. The city is incorporated, festively decked out. Even the element of world domination is in evidence, the emperor addressing his people - it is all there. The hippodrome, the stage for the contact between emperor and people, makes its appearance. Are the details Chrysostom uses correct? I think there is a good natural check for that, and that is his audience. In the public ceremonies, they are probably at least as well-versed as he himself, maybe more so, as they

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[14] In dictum illud prophetae David: *Ne timueris cum dives factus fuerit homo* II.2: PG55.514-515: BX.83-84.

[15] Translation: 'For if those who rule now, being both pious and taught to be humble and having nothing barbaric, would not perhaps choose as their neighbour when sitting in the agora, not merely an unknown and foreign person, but one of their acquaintance...'

are for the most part Constantinopolitans born and bred. If Chrysostom were to include exaggerated or stray elements in his descriptions, he knew he would not be credible any longer. He cannot work with a remote concept of *basileus* any more. Whatever he said would immediately be applied to the real *basileus* here. It is this immediate link that makes the general and passing references to the vanity of women, the emptiness of worldy riches, the bogus nature of imperial titles as important as the explicit and intentional few statements that have been considered to cause offence.

And at the same time, there are no statements of unquestioning acceptance of the imperial presence with its power and ceremonial to balance that impression. Chrysostom never pointedly says that he compares *the* emperor with the divine - he keeps to *a basileus*, but as I said, this fine distinction would be lost on an audience that identifies the pictorial props used by Chrysostom at least with the Byzantine imperial set-up, if not with the current emperor. Some evidence for seeing ideal qualities in rulers, though, seems to exist - there is an instance where even Nebuchadnezzar is seen positively, in contrast to earlier references. After the miracle of the furnace he is described as fully accepting God, despite living among sceptres and diadems.[16] But this might also be a less than benign hint, being written in exile: maybe Chrysostom wants to say that a ruler *should* not be corrupted by the surrounding splendour, rather than transmitting that in his experience rulers *are* not corrupted, and indeed this interpretation would fit better with later evidence from the letters to Olympias.

This chapter looked at Chrysostom's explicit references to the *basileus*, and his reaction to imperial reality in Constantinople. Most of the statements quoted were straightforward in their reference to an element of imperial life in the city. Probably because they were straightforward, easily identifiable and mostly in the context of a public occasion, the *basileus* tends to be seen quite positively. But the greatest difference with the next chapter lies not in the positive or negative content of the passages quoted, but in their nature as predominantly 'normal' metaphors in contexts when Chrysostom forgets anything but the theme and aim of his preaching. How does his image of the *basileus* behave in Constantinople, how does it affect him?

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[16] Olympias 10: SC13.167.

16 The *Basileus* and Chrysostom's Preaching

In the preceding chapter the attention was mainly focused on references Chrysostom made to the *basileus* publicly and consciously. There were also some passages from his sermons where he uses the imperial environment at Constantinople in his God-*basileus* metaphors, and mostly in a positive sense. This chapter looks at a different level. It deals with statements Chrysostom made simply in the context of preaching on a range of topics, and with no explicit reference to the palace next door. I find this chapter more important than the last in establishing, finally, what became of Chrysostom's attitude to '*basileus*' in Constantinople.

Often, the first impression of a quotation under this 'classification' is misleading. There are - seemingly - numerous references simply to the colourful ingredients of daily life in the orbit of the palace. Several passages are taken from the commentary on the Acts of the Apostles. The dating of this text is uncertain. It can be attributed to the years in Constantinople, judging from most of the content referring to imperial themes. There is, for example, a passage dealing with proper behaviour in church. Standing disorderly in the ranks of the angels, and with Chrysostom that also means in church, is comparable to laughing when the *basileus* is present and surveys his armies.[1] The same image is used in another text, recalling countless similar scenes Chrysostom sketched in Antioch. He tries to restrain laughter amongst the flock:

> Even when you enter the royal palace, you put your dress in order, and compose your look and gait, and all other respects, and here where there is the true palace of the *basileus* indeed, and things like those of heaven, you laugh. Indeed you do not, I know, see them, but hear that there are angels present everywhere, and in the house of God especially they stand by the *basileus*, and all is filled by these incorporeal powers.
> **C Hebrews 15.4: PG63.122: LF1877.196-197**

As a variation on this theme of coming into the palace there is a scenario which I interpreted as the man in the street coming into unlikely contact with royalty when I still attributed the text to the Antioch period.

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[1] C Acts 24.4: PG60.190D.

Accepting that this text dates from Constantinople, the setting is much more realistic, given the fact that Chrysostom himself and probably also some members of his audience sometimes had appointments at the palace. The context is that of the Christian soul being called off at death, and the honour and joy of this call. Chrysostom says it is wrong to weep and mourn - angels are present also on that occasion, 'sent by the *basileus* to call for their fellow servant'. And Chrysostom strengthens his argument by describing how one would not be sad either if 'as we sit together, the *basileus* were to send and invite one of us into the palace'.[2] But the story fits much better the conditions at Constantinople. Chrysostom probably does not refer to himself, but sitting together in Chrysostom's residence makes a call to attend some imperial function much more likely. On the other hand, Chrysostom seems still quite neutral about the earthly *basileus* here, which does point to the years before 403. The same is shown by a final passage, where he explains his appointed task as priest to be a disciplinarian, to be stern, just as those appointed by the *basileus* to a certain post do their duty, however disagreeable.[3] The comparison is a positive one and in contrast to certain later statements in the same text, where Chrysostom will feel the need to defend his role as a disciplinarian against more than just the faithful present in the church.

But to return to daily life in the orbit of the palace. Chrysostom refers to the making of imperial portraits, but to make his point embroiders this by introducing artists of apparently very different degrees of talent and intention:

> Tell me, if someone had beautified the emperor's daughter, and had become famous beautifying her and making her dignified, and someone else intended to deface her and was not capable of beautifying her - against whom would his intention be directed, against the artist or against the princess and her father? Just the same it is with you, when you are envious: you fight the church, but your war is with God.
> **C Colossians 11.4: PG62.380A**

This metaphor does not involve the spiritual, heavenly level, nevertheless it is a clear parallel between emperor and God. Again it demonstrates how Chrysostom adapts and assimilates his new environment - maybe

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[2] C Acts 21.3: PG60.168B.

[3] C Acts 5.3: PG60.53D.

unwittingly. This was a fairly neutral reference, simply looking for a good explanation in the metaphor, but there is another reference to the image of the *basileus*. One starts by sketching the *basileus* in outline, but only when the colours have been filled in and 'the outline is hidden by the truth' can he be called *basileus*.[4] This is not only the domestic scene of the court painter coming to make a portrait of the emperor, the passage is more important than that. It is a reference reflecting the power of icons, just as attested by Basil of Caesarea.[5] The full, coloured portrait represents the *basileus*. The most lifelike form of painting is accepted. Why, then, a painting, and not, for example, a painted statue? Maybe because of an aim of achieving maximum concentration, 'essence'. But then, why is the analysis by means of drawing not sufficient? Because it does not express the entire truth, leaves out the colours of life. The key to the interpretation of this metaphor is Scripture itself. The medium of painting has been chosen because of the two stages it incorporates - sketch and colouring, Old and New Testament.

There is another passage which is seemingly a keyhole glance at domestic detail in the palace, but actually refers to something different, in this case to Paul's experiences at Nero's court. Chrysostom describes how even those working within the imperial palaces disregarded everything for the *basileus* of the heavens, and that therefore those outside the palace 'should do so even more'.[6] A complex issue is introduced here. The implication seems to be that palace staff could be expected to have less of an awareness of, or commitment to, the *basileus* of heaven. Because they see a similar, human system straight before their eyes, and their allegiance is bound? Because at that time the earthly *basileus* incorporated the evil power on earth against the growing kingdom of the heavenly *basileus*? But even though the earthly *basileus* is something negative, the heavenly *basileus* is described in the same terms, and this heavenly *basileus* retains the priority - only that it is described as difficult to switch from the earthly to the heavenly *basileus* under the circumstances of the context, contrary to fourth- century conditions.

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[4] C Philip. 11.2: PG62.257C.
[5] De spiritu sancto PG9.488.
[6] C Philip. 16.4: PG62.294A.

However, there is that anti-earthly-*basileus* aftertaste to this passage, which has been observed in most statements made in Constantinople. In this respect some staple passages containing no hint of a Constantinopolitan context, and which therefore might just as well have been pronounced in Antioch, appear extremely negative. They form a constant and subtle barrage against not only wealth and luxuries, but also against imperial insignia, thereby questioning what is really the life blood of Constantinople and was without doubt perceived as such by its inhabitants. That these statements are made in the course of 'normal', not particularly spectacular homilies makes their potentially corruptive influence even more subtle. Thus there is, again, the technique of qualifying the power of earthly *basileis* in order to describe the power of spiritual qualities. The apostles talk freely to everybody, including monarchs and rulers.[7] The subject of that entire homily is how trial enforces gospel and faith, and how the anti-Christian or even just non-pious establishment has the blood of apostles and prophets on its hands. The power of prophets is comparable to that of apostles in this respect. Referring to III Kings 13.2, Chrysostom describes the utter impotence of King Jeroboam in face of the prophet. Diadem, armour, purple, armies, guards became useless at God's command, nobody can help the *basileus*.[8] Another recurring *topos* is that imperial insignia are unnecessary for the true *basileus*:

> He [Jesus Christ] was still in the manger that served Him for a cradle, when the magi came from Persia to adore Him. That is astonishing! When a *basileus* has to make an entrance in a city, everything is covered with decorations and illuminations, the powers that be and the magistrates all want to meet him in some pompous apparel, they are accompanied by flutes, trumpets, harps, all sorts of musical instruments. Magnificent are the clothes, the garlands, magnificence reigns everywhere. And when the *basileus* of the heavens comes into this world, none of this, it is absolutely the opposite...a mother without glamour...and the profoundest poverty...
> **Habita postquam presbyter Gothus 2: PG63.503-4: BXX.536-7**

With this argument Chrysostom rejects human predilection for pomp as something more ephemeral than shadow in the subsequent Ch. 3. The absence of royal splendour and eunuchs (!) from Christ's birth is repeated again in Ch.6. Elsewhere it emerges very strongly that

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[7] In templo s. Anastasiae 3: PG63.496: BXX.524.

[8] De s. hieromartyre Phoca 2: PG49-50.701: BIV.478.

Chrysostom seems to look to Christ as being above the complications of the imperial city. His royal character is unimpaired by wealth, high birth, power over a country, double talk, eunuchs, a golden palace, silken garments, luxury food. He is richer than all *basileis*, wiser than all philosophers, more eloquent than all speechmakers, and outshines those who wear diadems, and is nobler than those who run imperial cities - he belongs to the city above.[9] In this long speech both *basileus* and city are put in their place. Chrysostom's own spirituality surely was able to carry him high above the - to him - sometimes depressing environment of Constantinople, but this passage seems to reveal a feeling of weariness and isolation. One should note the theme of the homily – it is about regular church attendance. In this climate, it does not come as a surprise that the equation of the *basileus* with wealth, which appeared so strongly in Antioch, is also present in Constantinople. Chrysostom speaks about the real treasure. A thousand diadems are not as powerful as one word out of the mouth of an apostle. *Basileis* build strongrooms for treasure, but Christ's true treasure, in such a frail vessel, even guards those who keep it.[10]

It is also a familiar phenomenon that these rejected symbols of rank, and the presence of hierarchy as such, are used as a metaphor for laudable spiritual ambitions despite their qualifications. How can one endure to see others crowned because they have led a better life? As an example, Chrysostom sketches two soldiers – one steals and sees to his advantage and only acts the hero, the other does truly well. 'When the time arrives', the true soldier is led to the imperial throne and purple. And the other?

> Tell me, will he be able to endure his despair when he sees him who was ranked with himself ascended to the very highest point of dignities....5. For do not, I beseech you, suppose that because it is called a palace, therefore all are to attain the same things. For if here in the courts of *basileis* there is the prefect, and all who are about the *basileus*, and also those who are in very inferior stations, and occupy the place of what are called decani ... [though the interval be so great between the prefect and the decanus] much more shall this be so in the royal court above.
> **C Hebrews 13.4-5: PG63.108-109: LF 1877.170-172**

[9] Quod frequenter conveniendum sit 3: PG63.464: BXX.472-473.

[10] De capto Eutropiu 12: PG51-52.407: BVI.31.

A similar point using the same images of rank had been made before in the same text, more explicitly involving the *basileus*. Referring to Hebrews 4.14 ('For the word of God is living and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword...') Chrysostom compares the sword of the spirit to a *basileus* punishing his officers, demoting them, taking their signs of rank away.[11] This is also a direct, pure God-*basileus* parallel, and there are more statements like that, giving back to the *basileus* the positive role he so much more frequently held in Antioch. When discussing forms of panegyrics on the Lord, he cites Psalm 46.2-5: '...your name is glorified amongst the nations...the sovereign *basileus* of all earth ...'.[12] This just uses the term '*basileus*', but Chrysostom commits himself when in full flow of interpretation of Scripture:

> Our Lord Jesus Christ calls His coming in the flesh an *exodus* [or going out],...But Paul calls it an *eisodos* [or coming in]....Christ on his part calls it a going out, and justly, for we were out from God. For just as in royal palaces, prisoners and those who have offended the *basileus*, stand without, and he who desires to reconcile them, does not bring them in, so also Christ has done.
> **C Hebrews 3.1: PG63.27: LF 1877.31**

The metaphor of admittance to the royal presence is more elaborate in another homily of that cycle, involving a priest - guard simile which might be interpreted as Chrysostom's concern over the infighting church factions. Prompted by Hebrews 2.15, Chrysostom says that if a *basileus* publicly asks one of his guards to bind another for some wrongdoing, and this culprit does not submit to his colleague, it is ultimately the *basileus* who is offended by this behaviour – just as God is insulted if a teacher of the Word is attacked.[13]

There is one unequivocally positive reference to the *basileus* on his own, even outside the parallel. The value of this occurrence is somewhat deflated by the context - Chrysostom is trying to sway palace opinion into a forgiving mood. He compares Daniel and the lion with Arcadius and Eutropius, and explains that the *basileus* is not at his greatest when enthroned with all his accoutrements, but when showing real power over the barbarians who lie at his feet.[14] The description here of the triumphant *basileus* is obviously strongly reminiscent of the base of the

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[11] C Hebrews 7.1: PG63.61: LF1877.90.

[12] De Chananaea 6: PG51-52.454: BVI.94.

[13] C Hebrews 4.6: PG63.46: LF 1877.61.

[14] In Eutropium eunuchum patricium 3: PG51-52.394: BVI.9.

obelisk of Theodosius in the hippodrome. But also the royal garment fleetingly appears in a positive role: 'Just as sordid habits represent sin [in Scripture], a golden mantle represents virtue (Psalms 44.10). That is here the true royal garment...', and this is also an example of Chrysostom's attitude to metaphor in Scripture.[15]

These are all statements that do not intentionally refer to Arcadius, but may still be interpreted as a subtle way of introducing opinion and evaluation into what is always a public speech, the sermon in church. They may have influenced what people thought of the palace, at any rate Chrysostom could be accused of trying to do so. His degree of awareness of this cannot be reconstructed, but as he was more than outspoken when he did have something to say about the imperial couple, I assume that he really did not realize how his habits of speech laid him open to potential criticism.

A group of statements with a separate theme, but with exactly the same sad potential of misinterpretation, is formed by Chrysostom's remarks on luxury. These have already appeared in the course of the chapter, but they have not yet been examined in their own right. They may not be overwhelmingly relevant to a study on the *basileus*, but as so much of Chrysostom's fate is linked by contemporary sources and modern scholarship with isolated instances of such exhortations, one should look at them more closely.[16] 'A courtesan without beauty has to resort to paint and loud clothes' must be rated as a most provocative remark, considering that Chrysostom refers to the elegant and fashionable upper class ladies and courtiers.[17] And Chrysostom exhorts women not to use gold and jewels.[18] But when talking about the role of women he can surprise:

> I put above every man the woman that behaves bravely and firmly, that wields the spiritual weapons, dons the breastplate of justice,

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[15] De capto Eutropiu 14: PG51-52.409: BVI.35.

[16] The reconstructions of Chrysostom's fate by Liebeschuetz and van Ommeslaeghe, and how these exhortations figured in them, appeared on p.208-210. Many of the individual statements that are cited as having been found offensive by the palace happen not to have survived, or at least not in authentic homilies. Palladius VI.1-2: SC341.126-7 says that Chrysostom's enemies falsified homilies so that he seemed to attack the palace.

[17] Habita postquam presbyter Gothus 1: PG63.501: BXX.532. This remark should also be seen as evidence for the use of cosmetics in fourth-century Constantinople.

[18] In dictum illud prophetae David: *Ne timueris cum dives factus fuerit homo* I.5: PG55.506-507: BX.71-72.

> the helmet of salvation, the swordbelt of faith, that girds herself with truth, takes up the glove of the spirit...that lifts herself to heaven by the disposition of her soul...
> **De studio presentium 3: PG63.488: BXX.510-511**

This remark can of course reflect again on the uneven couple Arcadius and Eudoxia, where the empress despite all her fluctuations had maybe the greater potential. Mostly, though, Chrysostom's remarks about women must be seen in the context of his grave preoccupation with worldly distractions in general. He describes the hardship and despair of those who live for their ambitions, and hauntingly depicts the isolation in which a rich and successful man finds himself, surrounded only by untrustworthy flatterers - this tableau ends with 'What is more deceptive than human affairs?'.[19] Later in the same homily he contrasts the false splendour of a rich man's house with the true glory of the virtuous soul. He criticizes human attention to pretentious buildings, and he paints a vivid picture of a rich man's death, of the unmitigated sadness in the family, and of the uselessness of wealth in a cold tomb.[20] In the second homily on this theme most of these points are repeated.

Looking at these passages haranguing the amenities of city life offers a link to examining how Chrysostom saw himself as relating to the city, to the palace, the *basileus*, and above all whether he was conscious of any reaction to his unwittingly controversial statements. One of the most interesting kinds of remarks in this respect are his frequent expressions of bewilderment and sorrow at the smallness of the congregation in church. He thinks more people should have come and presumes they are absent through the 'tyranny of terrestrial possessions'. Then he goes on to describe the terrible fate of those absent:

> How will they fare when the terrible day will come, the incorruptible judgement, the judge who cannot be deceived? Neither the accomplishments of eloquence, nor the power of money, nor anything else can corrupt that justice. In the presence of him who is equity itself and who knows everything...there will exist neither *basileus* nor subject any more, nor rich and poor, nor wise and ignorant, all these masks will be destroyed, everyone shall be exhibited by his deeds. The diadem will no longer be seen round the forehead, the purple clothes, the seat on which one is carried, nor the lictors in great number running before you...everybody is presented stripped of all external pomp... [and

[19] In dictum illud prophetae David: *Ne timueris cum dives factus fuerit homo* I.3: PG55.502-503: BX.64.

[20] In dictum illud prophetae David: *Ne timueris cum dives factus fuerit homo* I.8: PG55.510-512: BX.77-78.

> he goes on to say why he deplores the absence of so many, they all think of their daily tasks]: The magistrates? They have only one thing before their eyes, the administration of the state. The *basileis*, those who wear the diadem? They too are absorbed with rule and power and dynastic problems and the state of finances, it is there that all their cares and thoughts are concentrated. Do they instruct themselves? And how can they, as the number of tasks does not leave them an instant of respite, and as they devote to the earth all their days and nights...
> **De studio presentium 1: PG63.485-86: BXX.506-508**

In Chapter 2 of this homily Chrysostom again aims a specific exhortation just at the women. – There are other reasons that Chrysostom holds responsible for the lack of zeal. The audience is considered small because of the torrential rains in the opening of one homily. But again the root lies deeper, Chrysostom presumes - those absent are kept away by too intensive an involvement with worldly concerns. He then takes 'a catastrophe' for the whole city as an example of where the love of riches leads - probably he refers to Eutropius there - and he describes the misery of such a life.[21] Chrysostom is occasionally exasperated at the sluggishness of his flock - 'It is enough that I preach to you twice a week' he exclaims.[22] And sometimes there is also a note of resignation: 'Our assembly is small, but our fervour is great'.[23]

The question is to what extent the audience stayed away really out of lack of commitment. The only possibility Chrysostom does not consider, at least not in such a way as to leave any evidence for us, is that by his unbending attitude he may have offended many of the people of Constantinople. Most of the inhabitants, after all, had to try and reconcile life in an imperial city with being Christians. Most not-so-recent scholars have always presented the situation as if Chrysostom had made enemies of incurable fops, vain rich wives and ruthless backstage politicians. But there is a strong possibility that there was a tragic misunderstanding: Chrysostom did not want to attack imperial rule, if anything he thought it was too earnest a concept to be hampered by overmuch attention to its external trappings and material consequences. But his audience may well have felt that, judging from their preacher's metaphorical habits, he in attacking or using these outer symptoms

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[21] Quod frequenter conveniendum 1: PG63.461-462.

[22] In dictum illud prophetae David: *Ne timueris cum dives factus fuerit homo* I.2: PG55.501-2: BX.61.

[23] In Templo St. Anastasiae 1: PG63.493: BXX.519.

attacked the imperial idea itself, its hierarchy, its city, and thereby its population. One must envisage that Chrysostom was making statements like 'being *basileus* will count for nothing in heaven' right next door to the palace. The palace, especially when inhabited by a weak *basileus*, may well have felt that here was a bishop wanting to brainwash the subjects into rejecting or at least becoming altogether too independent from its authority.

There are more unfortunate turns of speech by Chrysostom, like 'I am the father of you all' in a sermon on how the flux of time changes in Constantinople, and how quickly people fall from favour.[24] And there is that famous, and by Chrysostom's standards amazingly aggressive outburst where he asserts the powers of his position:

> Hereunto are we [Chrysostom] set, to be laughed at, and mocked, to suffer all sorts of things. We are the 'offscouring' of the world, as blessed Paul says. If any man refuse to conform to this order, that man I, by my word, as with a trumpet's blast, do prohibit to set foot over the Church's threshold, be he ruler, be he even crowned head. Either depose me from this situation, or if I am to remain, expose me not to danger. I cannot bear to ascend this throne, without effecting some great reformation. For if this be impossible, it is better to stand below. Nothing more wretched than a ruler who does his subjects no good...And as long as I sit on this throne, I will give up not one of its rights.
> **C Acts 8.3: PG60.76A**

One should again remember that the dating of this text is not conclusive, but the references made in these sentences certainly point to the tectonics of power at Constantinople. The prerogatives of the bishop, the weakness of Arcadius are both emphasized. More difficult is the attribution of these statements to a specific date - a definite threat to Chrysostom must have prevailed to provoke this outburst, which could to favour the later years in the city as a date, probably the first activities of the Synod of the Oak charging Chrysostom with mismanagement of his office - his 'great reformation' of streamlining administration, being authoritarian, introducing belt-tightening changes. On the other hand, the same text contained more positive references to the *basileus*, as was seen above - and at the Synod of the Oak, in fact until he was definitely exiled for the first time, Chrysostom could not be sure that he had lost imperial favour completely.

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[24] Cum Saturninus et Aurelianus 1: PG51-52.415: BVI.45.

Many little accusations and criticisms and misunderstandings could have sparked off this particular defence. My particular interpretation of the role Chrysostom's metaphorical habits played in his fate adds just a little facet to this complex problem. One should also not forget that to a great extent the friction at Constantinople could be based on something amounting to provincialism on the part of Chrysostom. Antioch was a city, but as a priest you did not have to come to terms with it. Constantinople as a city was intended as a background for the Christian emperor; in pursuing his own ideals, the spiritual part of this combination could not go solo the way Chrysostom tried. Moreover one should consider that Chrysostom in his complete rejection of late antique culture was ahead of many of his contemporaries, even in Constantinople.

But the passage above shows that Chrysostom was finally aware of a power struggle that could threaten his existence as bishop. Although there were contemporaries who understood his good intentions, there is evidence that he felt himself to be at the mercy of earthly powers when his fate turned.[25] This is expressed in a series of identifications. He compares himself with Job and says 'I will not let myself be submerged' when leaving for exile,[26] and the same comparison is made at his return.[27] And there is Abraham's and St. Paul's influence in another complicated identification process: Chrysostom identifies himself with Abraham, and his congregation is given the part of Sara. The surprise lies in the casting of the evil Pharaoh - that role is filled by Theophilus of Alexandria.[28] Pauline influence can be perceived in the female personification of the congregation, and this feminine role of the congregation being instructed by the male teacher appeared before - Chrysostom praises the chastity of the wife [congregation] until the husband [Chrysostom] had returned. And there is a token mention even of the rulers in this homily celebrating his return: 'Where are we? In happiness. The *basileis* are with us...'.[29]

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25 'I see the sincerity of your *διαθέσεως*....I am at the other end of the world, and all roads are beset with robbers...' - Innocent I to Chrysostom 1: PG51-52.535: BVI.221-222. This letter survived in Greek.

26 Sermo antequam iret in exsilium 1: PG51-52.427: BVI.67.

27 Post reditum ab priore exsilio I.1: PG51-52.441: BVI.74.

28 Post reditum ab priore exsilio II.1: PG51-52.443: BVI.77.

29 Post reditum ab priore exsilio I.2: PG51-52.442: BVI.76.

Frequently, though, Chrysostom sees himself as a martyr on these occasions: 'Your love gives me a crown for the life to come' he tells the people of Constantinople.[30] And when already in exile he tells imprisoned friends to 'Be happy for the reason of your captivity' in the same spirit of martyrdom.[31] Chrysostom seems at this point to have resigned himself to martyrdom. He sees his fate in terms of the archaic impious rulers under whom Abraham and St. Paul and the early martyrs suffered, he does not allow for the complexity of his own political situation. It now becomes a tragic foresight that he had always loved St. Paul so much: when already in Constantinople again Paul's courage is described, even in prison, even in the face of the wrath of rulers.[32]

But it is perhaps not surprising that the majority of his reactions against these conditions and his experiences are found in texts written in exile, for example in letters written to friends back in Constantinople. Strong feelings about imperial behaviour towards Chrysostom come to the surface. Partly, though, they are translated, with Nero and Nebuchadnezzar standing for the evil earthly *basileus*. Especially Daniel 3, the story of the furnace, appears again and again, in contrast to the previous positive remark on Nebuchadnezzar, which also appeared in the Constantinopolitan period. The furnace is now described as the temple of prayer, more august than the royal palace, in a letter to Olympias.[33] The plight of the three young men in the palace is compared with that of castaways surrounded by an evil and hostile element. And in another passage: 'the *basileus* invited them to share his fare, which was worthy of Sybarites, unclean and primitive'.[34] A reflection on imperial banquets? Then another Old Testament figure is recruited to highlight the fate of a victim in imperial hands: Joseph was still in prison when the minister toyed with affluence at pharaoh's court, and nobody mentioned him to the *basileus*.[35] It is almost as if Chrysostom intends to put more blame on the evilness and the intrigues of the court than on the *basileus* himself, which would indeed fit in with the evolution of his own case. An isolated *basileus* can still be eligible for some praise: Chrysostom considers it modesty when an emperor submits to the judgement of an

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30 Sermo antequam iret in exsilium 3: PG51-52.430: BVI.71.

31 Chrysostom to imprisoned Priests, first sentence, PG51-52.541: BVI.230.

32 In templo s. Anastasiae 2: PG63.494-495: BXX.522.

33 Olympias 7.2c: SC13.107.

34 Epistula: Letter from Exile 15: SC 103.130.

35 Olympias 10.14a: SC13.178.

eparch.[36] The involvement of Arcadius in court squabbles is also seen negatively by his brother in the West: 'He through whom we have our power and who has entrusted us with the care of the republic, the supreme Governor (gubernator omnipotens Deus)' , says Honorius, sounding like Eusebius. He goes on to criticise Arcadius, thinking he should take more of a stand in this Church conflict.[37]

The most comprehensive insight into Chrysostom's thoughts about the *basileus* in Constantinople is afforded by a long text from another Pauline cycle of homilies, those on Philippians. It contains most of the elements that in the majority of other passages often appear jumbled or at odds with each other. To begin with, the emperor himself is the object of some rather humane and very penetrating observations on the part of Chrysostom. Everybody needs to exercise his soul in strength and purity to cope with the adversities of life, and the emperor is no exception. After this general observation, Chrysostom embarks on a list of histories, legends, stories about the violence and depravity of emperors and members of the imperial household from the times of Constantine I onwards, and goes on:

> Do you see how tribulation is lauded, everywhere assumed as needful for us? For if in the contests of the world, no one without this receives the crown, unless he fortify himself by toil, by abstinence from delicacies, by living according to rule, by vigils, and innumerable other things, much more so here. For whom will you name as an example? The *basileus*? Not even he lives a life free from care, but one burdened with much tribulation and anxiety. For do not look to his diadem, but to his sea of cares, by which trouble is produced for him. Nor look to his purple robe, but to his soul, which is darker than that purple. His diadem does not so closely bind his brow, as care does his soul. Not look to the multitude of his guards, but to the multitude of his worries. For it is not possible to find a private house laden with so many cares as the palace of a *basileus*. Violent death is expected each day in the very palace, a vision of blood is seen as they sit down to eat and drink. Nor can we say how often they are disturbed at night and leap up, haunted with visions. And all this is in peace, but if war overtakes them, their cares are still more increased.
> What then can be more pitiful than such a life as this. What evils have they from those that are their own, I mean those under their power. And truly the pavement of the house of a *basileus* is always full of blood, the blood of his own relations. But if you will, I will relate some instances, and you will presently know that it is so. I will chiefly relate those of older date, but which are still kept in memory, as having happened in our own time. One, it is

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[36] C Philip. 7.2: PG62.219D-221C.

[37] Honorius to Arcadius, PG51-52.539-540; BVI.228.

said, having suspected his wife of adultery, bound her naked upon mules, and exposed her to the wild beasts, although she had already been the mother to him of many princes. What sort of life, do you think, could that man have led? For he would not have broken out into such vengeance, had he not been deeply affected with that distress. Moreover, the same man slew his own son, or rather his brother slew himself, together with his children, but he is also reported to have slain his own brother. And the one indeed slew himself, when seized by a rebel, and another put to death his cousin, his colleague in the kingdom, to which he had appointed him. Another saw his wife destroyed by medicines, for when she bore not, a wretched and miserable woman (for such indeed she was, who thought to give the gift of God by her own wisdom) gave her medicines, and destroyed the queen, and herself perished with her. Another again, after this, was destroyed by noxious drugs, and his cup was to him no longer drink, but death. And his son too had an eye put out, from fear of what was to follow, though he had done no wrong. It is not befitting to mention how another ended his life in misery. And after them, one was burnt, like some miserable wretch, amongst horses, and beams, and all sorts of things, and left his wife in widowhood. For it is not possible to relate the woes he was compelled to undergo in his lifetime, when he rose up in revolt. And has not he who now rules, from the time he received the crown, been in toil, in danger, in grief, in dejection, in misfortune, exposed to conspiracies? Such is not the kingdom of heaven, but after it is received, there is peace, joy, happiness, life, delight. But as I said, life cannot be without pain. For if in the affairs of the world, he who is accounted most happy, if the *basileus* is burdened with so many misfortunes, what do you think of private life? I cannot say how many other evils there are. How many stories have often been formed on these subjects! For nearly all the tragedies of the stage, as well as stories, have *basileis* for their subjects. For most of these stories are formed from true incidents, for it is thus they please. As for example, Thyestes' banquet, and the destruction of all that family by their misfortunes.

These things we know from the writers that are without: but if you want, I will add instances from Scripture too. Saul was the first *basileus*, and you know how he perished, after experiencing numerous ills. After him, David, Solomon, Abia, Hezekiah, Josiah, in like sort. For it is not possible, without afflictions and toil, without dejection of mind, to pass through the present life. But let us be cast down in mind, not for such things as these, for which *basileis* grieve, but for those whence we have great gain.

C Philip. 16.5-6: PG62.294-296: LF14.175-177

It is a long passage altogether. I do not intend to reconstruct the historical reality of what Chrysostom relates, and what legend goes with which emperor. What is important is that he thought these were facts, and some are indeed also known to us. But several observations can be made. The first impression must be that here is somebody thoroughly disillusioned with earthly rulership, and knowing Chrysostom's fate at imperial hands, this would fit only too well. On the other hand, the depravities of imperial dynasties, or rather the legends that had formed

around them, had also been the subject of the odd passage in Antioch times.

Still, this seems more than just a cursory prejudiced reference. This disillusionment is thorough, and affords us unusual insights. It is one of the rare occasions where Chrysostom admits to his classical education - he writes as if he had suddenly discovered that the ambitions and human entanglements of ruling houses were formative factors in the outlook and culture of the classical age. And then he discovers the same even in Scripture. The potential power, especially the destructive and self-destructive power of rulers, seems to have become central to Chrysostom's outlook, to his view of the world, its history, life in general. To read this passage is like witnessing a shock in slow-motion. That contact with the central imperial power would have made an impact on anyone moving to Constantinople and was only to be expected. That Chrysostom's negative experiences led to this evaluation rather than polemical reactions is interesting - it is as if he had come to accept these characteristics of earthly rulership as almost necessary and typical, only occasionally to be overcome by an exceptionally strong, good ruler.

His amazed detachment also appears in his analysis of the ruler's personal fate, first in general, then referring to Arcadius. Again, Chrysostom is not vindictive. He comes over more like a skilled social critic or playwright or psychologist gazing at the workings of such a ruler's mind and soul - he sees lust for power, the acceptance of violence alongside with practical and genuine fear of both the outcome of one's own doings and of violence and intrigue directed against oneself. The sleepless ruler, driven from his bed consumed with *angst* is a startling parallel to exactly what happened to Eudoxia after Chrysostom had been sent into his first exile - an experience which caused her to halt her proceedings against Chrysostom for the time being.[38] Arcadius

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38 The mysterious editor 'C.M.' of volume 14 of the Library of the Fathers puts Chrysostom's commentary on Philippians simply in the period at Constantinople in his preface, Bonsdorff more precisely in the spring or early summer of 399; my personal feeling is that it is much later. Bonsdorff's date seems indeed rather early for an open clash with the palace - Bonsdorff, *Predigttätigkeit*, p.82. But if one accepts it, the passage would then join the evidence for Chrysostom's accumulative arousal of palatine resentment by his representation of the *basileus* in his sermons. If, on the other hand, Chrysostom really does think of Eudoxia and Arcadius as the sleepless rulers, the appearance of this vision here could put the date of the text to after the first exile, which would fit in rather better with its general mood than the date proposed by Bonsdorff.

himself, like the fictitious emperor at the start of the passage, is described not so much as an active evildoer but much rather as a helpless puppet, hopelessly entangled in the cruelties of his task - which is precisely what was the case, and Chrysostom seems to sympathise.

So what can a conclusion be? On the one hand, references to the more unwholesome details of the Late Roman Empire had also appeared during Chrysostom's time in Antioch. On the other hand, one here finds an insight into the emotional factors, into the daily harassment of a weak emperor that would do credit to a psychoanalysist or the author of a classical tragedy. But that is precisely what Chrysostom is not. There is no clinical detachment or cold hate, but a bitter awakening to the more sinister implications of earthly authority and just how little it has to do with spiritual connotations. He never saw emperors through altogether rosy glasses, in superhuman goodness. It is precisely his awareness of human size that colours his assessment of the weakminded emperor at the centre of an evil web - his attitude is one of pity before judgement. In a way, he seems to have made his peace with the course of evil in this world, even if this peace takes the shape of disillusion.

17 Heaven in Constantinople

The conclusion of the previous chapter was that Chrysostom did not become fanatically hostile to imperial presence, imperial rule, the imperial idea. However, his staple images involving the *basileus* took on a very different significance compared to their harmlessness in Antioch. And as with all other issues, Chrysostom could not be found to adhere to one definite viewpoint only.[1]

If his evaluation of imperial earthly rule became more complex and expressed more realistic insight, what can the effect of Constantinople be on his description of heavenly power? Does the imperial metaphor become unfit for the translation of divine realities? Does Chrysostom's heaven change, will certain elements be dropped out because they are sharp reminders of earthly faults? These questions should be kept at the back of one's mind when running through Chrysostom's statements on heaven as he came to define it during and after his time in Constantinople. Thus, there is again the heavenly level to be gained as a start, and here one would not expect much variation from Antioch. There are two occasions for this ascent, one being the final entry into heaven, achieved by the good souls on judgement day. Against the background of lost souls who did not feed Christ being burnt gritting their teeth, Chrysostom tells Olympias that she will be crowned, will sing with the angels and rule with Christ.[2] This is certainly a more luridly veristic picture than the merely shivering souls of the Antioch period, and one wonders whether these lost souls are identical with Constantinople's uncharitable upper classes. However, little is said about the actual process of ascending, only about the final arrival - which is interesting in view of the hierarchy of heaven: the individual soul is crowned and rules, and at the same time sings with the angels. Another conventional metaphor that had appeared at Antioch is that of the musical heaven, which in this case is combined with the idea of the heavenly city, as if to show the Constantinopolitans what sort of community life is possible:

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[1] As a background to the interpretation of the passages cited in this chapter,, the reader should bear in mind the discussion of heaven in Part II, especially Chapter 11.

[2] Olympias 8.10d: SC13.135.

> Just as in a harp, the sounds are diverse, not the harmony, and they all together give out one harmony and symphony. I could wish to bring you into such a city, were it possible, wherein [all] should be one soul: then should you see surpassing all harmony of harp and flute, the more harmonious symphony. But the musician is the might of love: it is this that strikes out the sweet melody, singing a strain in which no note is out of tune. This strain rejoices both angels and God the lord of the angels. This strain rouses the whole audience that is in heaven, this even lulls the wrath of demons.
> **C Acts 40.3(4): PG60.286D**

One should note that the harmonious city here is not so much heavenly as hypothetical. Peculiarly, the heavenly Jerusalem seems completely absent from Chrysostom's catalogue of images in Constantinople. But there is a statement illustrating how the definition of heaven can turn against the idea of empire and of imperial city. Chrysostom tells his flock that the present life is just an exile, that they just pretend to be a citizen in a *patria*. 'Do not say: I am from this or that city. Nobody belongs to a city down here, the true city is above'.[3] That the Constantinopolitans attributed altogether too much importance to their own city, and that Chrysostom wanted to remind them of the true proportions seems to be a possible background also for a statement where he describes Christ as not needing citizenship - even the universe is just a small town for him, and he belongs to the city above.[4] These qualifications of earthly citizenship, the direction towards the heavenly state instead, all appeared also in Antioch, but I think the special pungency they must have had in this context with this audience is obvious.

But one must not disregard that the other roads to heaven, especially the spiritual ascent, of course also survived in Constantinople. The following quote illustrates that, along with introducing what seems to me to be a newly emphasized element:

> Paul...who lifted himself up in spirit to heaven and to the heaven of heavens, the home of angels and archangels and what is even beyond that, measuring it in daring flight of spirit, who embraces present and future, the visible and the invisible, happiness and suffering and all else without exclusion with his spirit.
> **C Colossians 17.2: PG60.551C**

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[3] De capto Eutropiu 5: PG51-52.401: BVI.20.

[4] Quod frequenter conveniendum I.3: PG63.464: BXX.473.

The elements witnessed throughout the fourth century appear again - the 'lifting oneself up', the 'flight of spirit' surmounting the dimensional frontiers of space and time, of material human experience. New here is an emotional dimension - 'happiness and suffering', which again seems indicative of Chrysostom's own experiences in Constantinople, perceiving and living through more than one side of any issue - the challenge of being patriarch is mixed up with having to face imperial expectations, the impressions of the pious and active group of women around Olympias is in contrast to the majority of sybaritic clerics staffing the patriarchate. Also, this spiritual process is here linked with a more definite description of heaven than usually observed in the ascents monitored for the Antioch period. A third level is added on top of heaven, the heaven of heavens - one cannot avoid the impression that Paul reaches further than the Cappadocians and Chrysostom in the Antioch period. The same statement is made in an earlier homily – Paul is being transported to the third heaven, a centrepiece of his self-conception and one that is taken over unqualified by Chrysostom, like anything else from Paul.[5] A close look at that specific cycle of homilies on Colossians reveals a sequence of passages on heaven, a heaven sometimes thwarted in its definition by Paul's presence:

> A servant calls Paul himself, he, who weighs as the whole world and thousand heavens...he, who as he liked could bind everything to himself and take it with him, who held first rank in the kingdom of heaven, who wore the victor's wreath, who was transported to the third heaven...
> **C Colossians 11.3: PG62.377CD**

It is almost as if Paul could be placed on one level with divinity itself, defeating heaven in importance and moreover 'having all that is of the first order' in heaven - is it surprising that God and Christ are not even mentioned anymore? On the other hand, one must not forget that this statement responds to a Pauline source and involves a very conventional Pauline and Christian image - 'the victor's wreath' meaning not much more than having been superlative in goodness of one's aims. Maybe this 'first order' was merely meant to be a metaphorical companion to this. Indeed it seems the only occasion where Paul is left alone with heaven, for in an earlier homily it is God who lets Paul 'leap over all intermediate stages and placed him on the throne in the heights of the heavens' but he still ends up being lifted above all angels, archangels,

[5] C Colossians 10.3: PG62.369D.

thrones and powers - a situation that seems unique for a human being.[6] A further definition of heaven is also given by Paul near the beginning of that homiletic cycle: Chrysostom explains that Paul uses the term 'in the kingdom of the Son' because it is the more awful name, the greater praise than 'kingdom of heaven', presumably because it contains more reference to the role of man in divine dispensation.[7]

These instances might lead one to believe that Chrysostom, when working on Paul, adopts a different conception of heaven, different from the views in all his other writings. But this impression is partly mitigated by the occurrence of more independent statements on heaven, apparently not under such strong influence from his source. Some interesting details appear, partly tallying with imagery from the early fourth century, partly presenting different slants on images created by Chrysostom during the Antioch period. Both apply to the following passage:

> And look at this miracle! He first sent down the angels, and then he led man up to them. Earth became heaven because heaven should take in earth...Heaven is no longer closed by a partition wall. - Before, the angels were distributed according to the number of peoples, now no longer according to the number of peoples, but of the faithful....For every faithful has a guardian angel, as always every God-pleasing man had an angel.
> **C Colossians 3.4: PG62.321D-322A**

The interchange of levels in the frame of divine design for the world leads to an amalgamation of spiritual and material space, and the idea of a 'partition wall' - again a Pauline image - is reminiscent of the image of the tabernacle and the temple curtain, which will appear in subsequent references. The same before-and-after effect referring to the Incarnation is then projected onto the inhabitants of heaven. The concept of angelic officials or governors running the administration of humanity, which would have fitted well as a parallel to imperial administration, is relegated to the era of the Old Law. Instead, the concept of a guardian angel connected with each believer is emphasized.[8]

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[6] C Colossians 5.1: PG62.332D-333A.

[7] C Colossians 2.3: PG62.313B.

[8] See p.176 and p.168-9. There is another and very isolated description of the function of angels, or more correctly of their role in Old Testament history. Commenting on Hebrews 2.3 - 'For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast...', Chrysostom alerts to the problem of the role of the angels also in the divining of the decalogue, and that this twofold meaning appears often in Paul. Chrysostom does not resolve this problem - C Hebrews 3.3-4: PG63.31: LF1877.38.

While accepting that the position of the angels is always ambiguous, one perceives that fixed patterns in heaven are dissolved, that there is something like an egalitarian movement - the individual angel looks after the individual human, the community of angels responds to the community of the faithful. Partly this egalitarian trend emphasizing the importance of the individual again is simply a response to the New Testament source, but it may fit in with something else: while on the one hand a hierarchical structure which would be a fitting mirror image of imperial conditions is denied, the presence of heaven and of angels gains in reality. The possible similarity of heavenly to earthly condition is again explored even in the same homily:

> How could he [Christ] pacify 'what is in heaven'? Was it also governed by war and fighting? And why do we pray 'Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven'? How is that? - The earth was separated from heaven, the angels were estranged with man because they saw how their Lord was disregarded. 'All to renew in heaven and on earth in Christ (Ephesians 1.10)', says the apostle..
> **C Colossians 3.3: PG62.321BC**

Again heaven and earth are given the same denominator; to be changed by Christ's incarnation. Heaven may be different, but not necessarily superior. Again the more static pattern that is presumed by Eusebius to make his ideology possible is denied. The emphasis in this entire 3rd homily is on heaven having been created and having been changed, the point of departure is Christ and how the material and immaterial are not seen separately by him in fulfilling his purpose. Therefore heaven and earth form something comparable to an electron cloud round the nucleus of Christ: they are always in motion and shifting levels. Chrysostom once states, in Chapter 2 of this homily, that this precondition makes all combinations possible - or this is how I interpret this difficult passage.[9] He only has one reservation: he sees 'what is in heaven' as potentially debatable by humans (he even cites Paul of Samosata!), but as no less created than 'what is on earth' and visible to humans. The metaphysical depth of Chrysostom's argument in this text leaves little room for the assumption that this view of heaven was inspired by having the imperial nerve centre at his doorstep, at least not positively. Perhaps negatively? Chrysostom explains Paul's 'walk in Him' (Colossians 1.10) thus: '...for he is the way leading to the Father....not the angels, that way does not

[9] C Colossians 3.2; PG62.319ABC.

lead to him'.[10] The way to God leads not through the angels, but through his son. The way to the emperor - does not lead through his officials and satellites...?

Still, the cohesion of just this text and Chrysostom's thoughts on heaven in it must not be expected to prevail. But interestingly, the same tendencies can be observed in another of Chrysostom's texts on St. Paul, his Commentary on Hebrews. Chrysostom's definitions of heaven are prolific in this text, and they are also unusually complex. Ascent, heaven, heavenly beings and a rejection of imperial attributes all figure in the following quote which responds to Hebrews 9.23:

> And how are they 'patterns of things in the heavens'? And what does he mean by 'the things in the heavens' this time? Does he mean heaven? Or is it possible that he means the angels? None of these, but our Christian rites. It follows then that our services are in Heaven, and are heavenly. And the Cherubim appeared on earth, but yet they are heavenly. And why do I say 'appeared'? Rather they dwell on earth, just as they did in Paradise: but this is nothing; for they are heavenly...
> 3. If then we are heavenly, and have obtained such a sacrifice, let us fear. Let us no longer continue on the earth; for even now it is possible for him who wishes it, not to be on earth. For to be on earth and not to be, is the effect of moral disposition and choice. For instance, God is said to be in heaven. Wherefore? Not because he is confined by space, God forbid, nor as having left the earth destitute of his presence, but by His close relation to and intimacy with the angels....
> Let us then become heaven, let us mount up to that height, and so we shall see men in no wise different from ants. I do not speak of the poor only, or the multitude, but even if there be a great general there, even if the *basileus* be there, we shall not distinguish the *basileus*, nor the private person. We shall not know what is gold, or what is silver, or what is a silken or purple garment, we shall see all things as if they were flies, if we are seated in that height above. There is no tumult there, no disturbance, no clamour.
> **C Hebrews 16.2-3: PG63.125-126: LF1877.202-203**

What is possibly the greatest difference from descriptions of heaven at Antioch is shown in the last paragraph of this extract - external attributes do not even appear, and heaven is essentially defined by the absence of upheaval, disturbance, confusion. Between these lines one seemingly can read a desire to be truly above all the confusions and misunderstandings of this nether world. This fits with what one must assume were Chrysostom's emotions at least some of the time: almost a wish to quit at least the materialistic and ambitious world of Constantinople. Maybe

[10] C Colossians 5.1: PG62.337C.

Chrysostom sometimes did not feel equal to the developments that were embroiling him, and he sometimes did make mistakes in handling a situation. This seems like reading a lot into some statements. I put forward these interpretations quite tentatively, and it is because these quotes are such sensitive material that I reproduce them at such length. Thus at any rate Chrysostom has a chance to speak for himself, alongside superimposed theories. However – the last point made in the passage above emerges as arguably the overriding element in descriptions of heaven in Constantinople: the kingdom of heaven is equated with rest also in an earlier homily of that cycle.[11] In the following sentences it is supported by familiar images based on the *basileus*:

> For that is indeed rest, where there are neither cares, nor labours, nor agony, nor fear stunning and shaking the soul, but only that fear of God which is full of delight...all is peace, joy, gladness, pleasure, goodness, meekness. There is no jealousy, nor envy, nor sickness, nor this death of the body, nor that other of the soul. There is no darkness nor night, all [is] day, all light, all things are bright. It is not possible to be weary, it is not possible to be satiated: ever shall we continue with a desire of good things.
> Would you that I should also give you some image of our condition there?...Let us look up into the heaven, when without any intervening cloud it shews forth its crown [of stars]. Then when we have dwelt long on the beauty of its appearance, let us think that we too shall have a pavement, not indeed such [as this], but as much more beautiful as is a roof of gold than those of clay, and [let us think] on that which is beyond it again, the higher roof; then on the angels, the archangels, the infinite multittude of incorporeal powers, the very palace of God itself, the throne of the Father.
> But language is too weak to set forth the whole. Experience is necessary, and the knowledge which [comes] by experience. Tell me, how was it...with Adam in Paradise? This [heavenly] life is far better than that, as much as heaven [is better] than earth.
> But however let us search after another image still. If it were to happen that he who now reigns was master of the whole world, and yet was troubled neither by wars nor by cares, but was honoured only and lived delicately; and had large tributes, and on every side gold flowed in to him, and he was looked up to, what feelings do you think he would have, if he saw that all the wars in all the parts of the world had ceased? Some thing such as this will it be. But rather I have not even yet arrived at that image which I seek, therefore I must search after another too.
> Imagine then, I pray you: for just as some royal child, so long as he is in the womb, has no sense of any thing, but should it happen that he suddenly came forth from thence and ascended the royal throne, and not gradually, but all at once received possession of all things. So is it as regards this and that state. Or if some captive, having suffered evils innumerable, should be caught up at once to the royal throne.

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[11] C Hebrews 6.1; PG63.53-54; LF 1877.77.

> But not even thus have I attained to the image exactly. For here indeed whatever good things a person may obtain, even should you say the empire itself, during the first day indeed his desires are in full vigour, and for the second too, and the third, but as time goes on, he continues indeed to have pleasure, but not so great. For of whatever kind it be, it always ceases from our being accustomed to it. But yonder not only is it not diminished, but it even increases... For if when we go out into a plain, and there see the soldiers' tents fixed with curtains, and the spears and helmets and bosses of their bucklers glittering, we are raised above the earth in wonder and admiration, but if we also chance to see the *basileus* himself running in the midst or even riding with golden armour, we think we have everything - what do you think it will be like when you see the everlasting tabernacles of the saints pitched in heaven? When you see each one of them beaming with light above the rays of the sun, not from brass and steel, but from that glory the gleaming of which the eye of man cannot behold? And this indeed with respect to the human beings [that are there]. But what, if one were to speak of thousands of angels, of archangels, of Cherubim, of Seraphim, of thrones, of dominions, of principalities, of powers, whose beauty is inimitable, passing beyond all understanding?
> **C Hebrews 6.4: PG63.58-60: LF1877.84-86**

These sentences startlingly show the reality of the simultaneity of concepts in Chrysostom's thinking. Prominent are again the pointed rejections of all symbols of importance in Constantinople, and the equation of heaven with a peaceful state of mind. But then, in the further course of his explanations, Chrysostom in his urge to explain tries one image after the other. He shows an acute awareness of the importance of choosing just the right image to convey the spiritual experience of heaven, and the entire passage is an organic development in the quest for that one image. In the entire cycle of homilies this extract belongs to, heaven is infinitely superior to earth and free from all earth's complicating factors, free from ambition, rank, hierarchy, gold and purple, all attributes connected with worldly rule, and here such things are used to illustrate heaven. I think such conflicting observations illustrate just how much Chrysostom was a slave to longstanding habits of preaching which subconsciously creep into his speech although they oppose what he consciously feels and wants to convey.

There are more surprises. In the course of Chrysostom's conscious effort to describe heaven as having really no earthly parallel even in the greatest riches and symbols of power, also Christian symbols are qualified. Chrysostom says about types that they contain only the figure of a thing and not its power, and 'so too it is in respect of heaven and the tabernacle', it may be a holy place, but the power and 'the other things'

were not the same.[12] And there is a more complex discussion of this theme when Chrysostom examines the role of Christ in heaven, commenting on Hebrews 9.28. Paul juxtaposes ancient symbols to Christian rites, and the entire heaven to the ancient temple. The temple was built to prefigure heaven, but Chrysostom warningly reminds us of God's condescension: 'Christ has not entered the Holy Places, made by hands, which are the figures of the True'. The outcome of the entire, very difficult passage seems to be that man must never become prey to the deception that types and figures possess any independent power or right of existence, that they are little more than props. Almost correspondingly, the Church emerges as the strongest icon of heaven, as Chrysostom expounds speaking about Hebrews 8.6 'Who serve the example and shadow of the heavenly things...':

> What are the heavenly things he is here speaking of? The spiritual things. For though they are performed on earth, they are nevertheless worthy of the heavens. For when our Lord Jesus Christ lies slain as a sacrifice, when the spirit is with us, when He who sits on the right hand of the Father is here, when sons are made by the washing, when they are fellow-citizens of those in Heaven, when we have a country, and a citizenship, and a city /home there, when we are strangers as to things here, how can all these be other than heavenly things?...Are not our hymns heavenly? Is it not that the very things which the divine choirs of incorporeal powers sing on high, these we also who are below utter in concert with them.....How again can the rites which we celebrate be other than heavenly?.....Was it then only what concerned the furniture of the temple that he saw, or was it also what related to the sacrifices, and all the rest? No, one would not be wrong in saying even this; for the Church is heavenly, and is nothing else than Heaven...
> **C Hebrews 14.1: PG63.111-112: LF1877.176-177**

The Church clearly has become Chrysostom's sanctuary and heaven in the stressful environment of Constantinople. How truly it was a sanctuary was illustrated already early on in his time there by the case of Eutropius, who clung to the altar to save himself from the imperial troops.[13] The Church had always been a heavenly palace in Antioch,

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[12] C Hebrews 17.3: PG63.131: LF1877.212.

[13] Surprisingly, an almost old-fashioned cosmic discussion of heaven involving the idea of the tabernacle also survives in C Hebrews. Chrysostom grapples with the concept 'veil of flesh' and the other furnishings of the tabernacle - C Hebrews 15.1: PG63.117-118: LF1877.187-188. He seems not at home with these images, this entire part of the homily is repetitive and lurches from image to image, introducing other issues, like e.g. this definition of the Cherubim at the end simply as 'glorious' - his explanation of Cherubim and Seraphim used to be more convincing and fluent at Antioch.

and for Chrysostom angels were present at the Eucharist, it has now only become stronger in its role as earthly heaven.

If heaven as a hierarchical structure emerges slightly qualified, what about its inhabitants? Chrysostom speaks of angels extensively. Sometimes they are described predominantly positively: 'The angels are ashamed and saddened when we let them down by sinning, because we are entrusted to them'.[14] And 'the better hope is to minister to God among angels'.[15] In this context he also reminds us again that the angels must have been at odds with one another, as 'he made peace as to things on earth and things in heaven'.[16] There is, of course, the old problem of precedence as regards angels and man, illustrated by the following two statements. Explaining Hebrews 2.8 Chrysostom states that the world was put in subjection not to the angels – that would be unthinkable – but to Christ.[17] The next verse, Hebrews 2.9, is made to tally with that. Jesus was made a little lower than the angels, but was crowned with glory for his death, and Chrysostom interprets '...if He who is worshipped by angels for your sake endured to have a little less than the Angels, much more ought you who are inferior to the angels bear all things for His sake'.[18]

The relation between Christ and the angels is clarified in another homily with the same argument that was used extensively in Antioch. Chrysostom testifies to the elevation of Christ above the angels with the argument that they were never called 'son'.[19] Faithful humanity is well-received in celestial circles – as regards reason, we are equal to the angels, 'the kingdom is promised to us, the community with Christ'.[20] Here man is equal to angels by definition through the way he is created. On the other hand, heaven is also still the prize simply for good behaviour, for exertions in the frame of the Christian code of morality.[21] The basket of rewards is filled with a jumble of images - brilliant crowns, the chair of virgins, the bridal chamber of the heavens, the life

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[14] C Hebrews 23.4: PG63.check: LF1877.272.
[15] C Hebrews 13.2: PG63.104-105: LF1877.165.
[16] C Hebrews 17.1: PG63.128: LF1877.208.
[17] C Hebrews 4.1: PG63.38: LF1877.49.
[18] C Hebrews 4.2: PG63.39: LF 1877.50-51.
[19] C Hebrews 2.3; PG63.24; LF 1877.26.
[20] C Philip. 8.6: PG62.238AB.
[21] as in Olympias 8.3d: SC13.121.

with angels, the familiarity and intimacy with the bridegroom...the spiritual fusion with Christ being the condition that is translated by the bridal terminology .

But while Chrysostom in one short remark puts the emphasis on the preference of man before angels;[22] in a longer statement on Hebrews 3.2-3, he seems to resolve the conflict by illustrating the interdependence of angels and man:

> Why do you look so closely at the angels [says he]? They are servants of the Son of God, and are sent many ways for our sakes, and minister to our salvation. And so they are partners in service with us. Consider how he ascribes no great difference to the kinds of creatures. And yet the space between angels and men is great; nevertheless he brings them down near to us, all but saying: For us they labour, for our sake they run to and fro, on us, one might say, they wait. This is their ministry, for our sake to be sent every way.
> **C Hebrews 3.2-3: PG63.30: LF1877.36**

Chrysostom then cites examples - the nativity, the liberation of St. Peter, and the angels in the sepulchre. 'God sends His angels to help his friends'.[23] The attention to the theme of heaven in these comments on St. Paul is certainly conspicuous, but as in all his commentaries one must realize that Chrysostom oscillates between being strongly influenced by Paul and arguing a line born out of his own pedagogical concerns. But it is obvious that Paul seems to have been nearer Chrysostom's mind in the definitions of heaven than in Antioch, a fact which will be explored later.

However, the importance of man can also be severely qualified, taking him out of the centre of God's purpose and dispensation. One has to admire God not because he created man, and better than any other creature, nor because he has 'bestowed the kingship of the visible things on us and has given us the sceptre, but because he does not need us'.[24]

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[22] C Hebrews 5.3; PG63.49-50; LF 1877.66.

[23] C Hebrews 3.3: PG63.30: LF1877.36. See also p.

[24] Ad eos qui scandalizati sunt 7.39: SC79.130.

Man is missing in the following descriptions of the infrastructure of heaven, which concentrate on the heavenly beings alone. Some statements seem indistinguishable from the Antioch period, but the following text dates from Chrysostom's exile in Cucusa:

> Thus you see the Seraphim flying around the throne high and sublime, protecting their eyes under the cover of their wings, veiling their feet, back and face and letting forth a cry full of astonishment - do not believe, though, that they have feathers, feet or wings. 2. For these powers are invisible, but by such images think about the inaccessibility, the incomprehensibility of him sitting on the throne....3. ...sitting on a throne and surrounded by powers - that means him condescending, not really sitting...
> **Ad eos qui scandalizati sunt 3.1-3: SC79.74**

The description of the Seraphim is more detailed than in similar earlier passages. But the interpretation is the same - the metaphor as a tangible translation of a sublime spiritual state. Chrysostom's appreciation and use of imagery therefore has not changed since Antioch, it seems to be a constant element - therefore it can be held to apply to all his later texts. Chrysostom's explanations here seem a direct continuation of the statements examined for the Antioch period, there is no inconsistency. The biblical characteristics of the Seraphim also appear again, in that God is incomprehensible even to them, and they stand around his throne with their faces hidden.[25] And just as in the earlier period, Chrysostom does continue to use this established imagery. Knowing his attitude, one must conclude that he uses it consciously, as a language - under the circumstances it seems unlikely that even such a conventional metaphorical sequence, describing the heavenly population surrounding Christ and serving him, can slip into his thoughts as an unconscious adoption.[26] In one passage Chrysostom uses more cosmic terminology and concentrates on the beauty of the sky instead of that of heaven, and describes how stars guide us, using the image of the 'choir of stars' in the context of describing the beauty of the night sky.[27] Descriptions of the final judgement are also familiar, but the 'basileus of the heavens' , often present in Antioch, is missing in at least one instance. Legions of

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[25] Ad eos qui scandalizati sunt 3: PG51-52.484: BVI.143.

[26] as in C Philip. 14.2: PG62.279AC.

[27] Ad eos qui scandalizati sunt 7: PG51-52.492-94: BVI.155-156.

angels and celestial virtues descend with 'the Father' as their focus.[28] At the end of the process of the Last Judgement only the cross will shine.

Also heavenly hierarchy as such can be subject to rejection. Chrysostom explains that it is not only futile to try and fathom Providence, but says that, surprisingly, '...It does not matter how God governs angels and archangels, Cherubim and Seraphim, or the other invisible powers...'.[29] And there is a pronounced qualification of the importance of heaven itself. In two strong statements Chrysostom puts the Church above heaven. There is a possibility that he actually means physical heaven, sky, but in the Greek that is of course not given away - the interpretation is left to the audience. Nothing is as strong as the Church, 'I even say, the church is stronger than the heavens' says Chrysostom based on Matthew 24.25 'Heaven and earth will pass, my words will not pass'.[30] And heaven is to serve the Church, not vice versa. 'The Church is dearer to God than heaven'.[31] The key to these sentences is their context - it is Chrysostom's final address to his flock before going into exile, at a time when his disillusionment with the imperial system of power can be assumed to have been at its most bitter. A sign of his emotion are the short, pungent sentences in this homily. Heaven is almost rejected in favour of the Church, conceivably because, having been described in terms of the earthly *basileus* so frequently, it is now too similar to earthly hierarchies in Chrysostom's mind.

However, there occur also unusual descriptions of heavenly hierarchy, more directly aimed at explaining spiritual conditions. There is a long stretch where Chrysostom tries to define the 'greatness' of God, the 'greatness' of the Son, and the corresponding need for humility and modesty in human beings - who in this instance cannot even hope to equal angels! To practise humility, the individual human should consider himself lower than his real station. For: if the *basileus* submits to the eparch, he shows humility. But if the eparch is submitting to the *basileus*, that is not humility, because that is his station anyway. The comparison comes only at the end of a long stretch of totally a-metaphorical definitions of the relative greatness of divine beings. Even

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[28] Ad eos qui scandalizati sunt 17: PG51-52.518: BVI.197.

[29] Ad eos qui scandalizati sunt 2: PG51-52.482: BVI.139.

[30] Sermo antequam iret in Exsilium 1: PG51-52.429: BVI.68.

[31] Sermo antequam iret in Exsilium 2: PG51-52.429: BVI.69.

then, the comparison remains contained in the human level, and wants to explain behaviour desirable in humans, not a divine condition.[32]

This example of Chrysostom handling heaven in abstract terms completes the range of descriptions of heaven and his use of images in these descriptions for the post-Antioch period. In content, although little has changed where individual conventional images are concerned, there seems little consistency - the appearance of Paul in heaven, for instance, leads to a totally different hierarchy and forms an image of its own. Paul's prominent heavenly position is maintained in stray references from both the period in Constantinople and from exile. In many homilies that are really devoted to other themes St. Paul is mentioned frequently, he is for example identified with strong patriarchal figures like Abraham and Joseph.[33] Did Chrysostom hope to gain strength for his own situation from these biblical personalities?

In many texts Chrysostom describes Paul in heaven. In a letter to Olympias he is described as being part of the celestial concert,[34] while in a homiletic context heaven and the angelic community rejoice at Paul's arrival.[35] One very possibly witnesses a process of identification here. Paul had been a long-term victim in imperial hands. Chrysostom had always had a special leaning towards Paul's writings and personality, an almost fanatic admiration. Now he finds himself even in the same position - victimized by the whim of imperial power-play. Even more reason to highlight Paul's sufferings and maybe to hope for a similar triumph.

Has Chrysostom's heaven become unhinged during his stay in Constantinople? At any rate there seems to be much less of a consistent pattern, of hierarchical staples than one could establish for the period at Antioch, even given the smaller amount of textual material. Is there possibly a change of attitude behind this? The examination of a peculiar batch of references to the heavenly kingdom or any courtly or hierarchical structure may perhaps shed some light on this problem. To

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[32] C Philip. 7.2: PG62.219D-221C.

[33] Ad eos qui scandalizati sunt 10: PG51-52.501: BVI.169. See also Chapter 13, p.192 ff.

[34] Olympias 8.11d: SC13.136.

[35] C Philip. 5.1: PG62.206D-207A.

start with, it is again Chrysostom's preoccupation with Paul that seems to upset established patterns:

> Paul shows his hands to them, more magnificent than any golden jewelry, than any royal diadem. A jewelled ribbon not so becomingly wreathes itself around the head as an iron chain for Christ's sake. Then the prison was more magnificent than the royal palace. What do I say: the royal palace? More magnificent even than heaven...If one would offer me a situation either with the angels up there or with Paul in bonds, I would choose the dungeon. If someone could make me into part of the heavenly armies standing by God's throne, or into such a captive - I would prefer to become such a captive.
> **C Ephesians 8.1: PG62.56B-D**

All of a sudden it is not such a desirable distinction to be part of the heavenly ranks, even to stand by God's throne is negative compared with earthly suffering of Paul's size. Are there clues in the passage for possible reasons for the development of this attitude? The disdain of royal accoutrements in comparison with spiritual achievements has also been witnessed in the Antioch period.[36] And it can of course be understood as explained by Chrysostom and other authors themselves - those highest human material values can stand for material greed and lust for power in itself and therefore have to be rejected.

But here not only the royal palace is rejected in favour of prison, but heaven itself. Chrysostom identifies with Paul to such a degree that in an attempt to explore and re-live this martyrdom, and to gain such a privileged position in heaven, he prefers being 'such a captive' to 'ordinary' admittance to heaven. This process may have been triggered off by Chrysostom's own experiences at imperial hands, although the dating of this particular text is too uncertain to determine whether he was already under an imperial cloud when composing it. There is another argument involving this idea, and this is corroborated by other statements discussed in this chapter: that Chrysostom had had enough negative experiences of what he regarded as palace whim to react unusually strongly not only against royal earthly patterns, but also against heaven, unconsciously identifying heaven too much with the hierarchical, imperial imagery he himself avowedly uses to explain this divine level. Such a shift away from the idea of heaven is also corroborated by statements

[36] It should be kept in mind that this achievement here is martyrdom, which frequently entails a slightly different concept of heaven, in which the choirs of martyrs dominate.

such as in a letter to Olympias, where he stresses that the merit in suffering like Paul lies in this suffering being for Christ's name, not just for the sake of the kingdom of heaven.[37]

Parallel to that, one should remember that also in Antioch Chrysostom had showed a marked preference for Paul, more pronounced than in earlier fathers. This preference would have conditioned him negatively for an encounter with the earthly empire, would have prompted him to almost expect, or even hope for, the worst experiences. It seems tragic that after a lifelong admiration Chrysostom finds himself virtually reliving Paul's fate - or so it must have seemed to his exaggerated preoccupation with things Pauline.

So the kingdom of heaven lost its validity because its earthly counterpart did not fulfil its role for Chrysostom, except in a negative sense? If this is indeed the psychological process behind these statements, it is even more amazing because Chrysostom then seemingly forgets that he himself used earthly royal terminology only as a help for translation of heavenly conditions which in reality bear no resemblance to earthly kingdoms or royal objects. Another possibility is that the earthly empire is seen so negatively because it quite clearly fell short of its role as guardian of the Christian faith, at least in Chrysostom's eyes. Chrysostom does allude to this role in some statements, although he apparently makes not as much of it as Eusebius. But that still would not be a reason for rejecting heaven, although heaven does come in for rather harsh treatment, in case it tampers with matters of faith. Even the most exalted angel of heaven shall be cursed if he turns around the gospel, and Chrysostom adds: 'He [Paul] does not simply say 'by the angels', because also priests are angels', which makes one think immediately of Chrysostom's ecclesiastical enemies.[38] And to consider an angel even capable of questioning divine dispensation is unusual. Still, it is not an isolated occurrence. Chrysostom's interpretation of John 1.14 takes the line that John distracts attention from Old Testament glorious visions of angels and archangels because Christians should behold glory just from God, the *basileus* himself.[39]

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[37] Olympias 13.4a: SC13.196.
[38] C Galatians 1.8: PG61.624A.
[39] C John 12.1: PG59.81D-81A .

A severe slimming-down and streamlining of the heavenly environment thus does take place - the importance, even the goodness of heaven is qualified, it almost comes to be regarded with suspicion, attention is to be focused solely on the spiritual powers of God and Christ. It recalls the explanation Chrysostom gave for the use of metaphor: the very early biblical appearances of God in natural powers (wind, fire, mountain) were intended for the uninitiated, who could not identify with more spiritual forms. It seems as if he takes this thought a step further here, by dispensing even with the sophisticated imagery he used himself, and reducing Christian imagination to the use of abstract spiritual concepts and concrete entities - like the Church. And again this might be triggered by dissatisfaction with that earthly pattern that provided the terminology for this imagery. Had Chrysostom lived longer, this development might have been represented more prominently.

To conclude: Chrysostom's imagery of heaven is not influenced in the sense of becoming enriched in detail in the same way that could be monitored for his attitude to the earthly *basileus*. On the other hand, one makes the startling discovery that Chrysostom's heaven does change. Partly that can be traced to his own negative experiences at Constantinople with the imperial court which make imperial terminology unfit for a translation of heavenly realities. On the grounds of these same experiences an identification with Paul can reasonably be argued to have taken place, with the consequence of a separate view of heaven centred on Paul.

Not all the texts considered were written in a time of active difficulties with the imperial court. But even by watching everyday splendour, greed, vanity and intrigue Chrysostom may well have been stimulated to the thought that the royal terminology, the images he used for an explanation of the spiritual level had taken on rather too much of a reality, were not abstract and disinterested enough any more. A heaven with a hierarchical pattern can have become suspect in his eyes. If it was conscious, this must have been a sad realization. Did he find another heaven in his personal faith? Maybe in more than one way. The heaven above became more abstract, and he seems to concentrate more on the space above heaven, on God as the seat of spiritual essence. Parallel to that, Chrysostom falls back on the Church as a humanly tangible form of heaven. When the holy mysteries of the service were enacted, and he felt

the rapport with and love for his flock, Chrysostom had always felt content, at one with God. The Church had nothing to do with the palace, it was a spiritual space. The violence and political poison that entered also the church in Constantinople could be seen as an atypical, one-off occurrence, while the behaviour of the palace fitted into Chrysostom's view of the frailties of human institutionalized rule.

Appendix: Hell in Constantinople

A thought should be devoted to Chrysostom's attitude to 'hell' while at Constantinople. The Antioch evidence showed that he had no elaborate conception of a place like 'hell', what he envisaged was more a non-heaven, just as demons were non-angels, angels that had forfeited their definition as heavenly beings.

In Constantinople, 'hell' does not seem to appear, but Chrysostom takes up his arguments against the Manichaeans. These references all come from the same homily. He draws warning attention to the misconception of the Manichaeans in considering 'evil' as an acting god.[40] Further on, he admits that evil must exist and quotes St. Paul on this. The *raison d'être* of evil is that it must be battled against and turned into good.[41] Subsequently, the devil appears again in Chapters 15 and 17, the rescue from the devil is effected through the power of the cross. A remark that must be considered as reflecting on Chrysostom's personal fate is that persecutors are ranked as evil: '...the persecutors excite nothing but shame and revulsion...'.[42]

What could be a possible explanation of this absence of 'hell' , which in any case was never prominent even in Antioch? Maybe the polarization of good and evil had shifted for Chrysostom. In Antioch there was heaven, earth and something far worse than earth, a bleak, deserted state of the soul. In Constantinople, there was heaven, the realm of peace and calm, and an earth perceptibly more imperfect than in Antioch, coming itself so close to this state of non-heaven that defined 'hell' in Chrysostom's earlier works.

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[40] Ad eos qui scandalizati sunt 4: PG51-52.487: BVI.148.

[41] Ad eos qui scandalizati sunt 12: PG51-52.507-508: BVI.181.

[42] Ad eos qui scandalizati sunt 24; PG51-52.527; BVI.210.

Conclusion and Outlook

It seems to me that in a theme as complex as the terminology based on the *basileus* and how it was applied to heaven, connected with the tremendously expansive works of Chrysostom, one should not even aim to arrive at one-dimensional answers. One can collate evidence, chart processes, document developments, and give them an interpretation that makes sense both with the material and its context, while not claiming that this is the only possible solution. Chrysostom's thought-processes are far too fascinating and surprising for that. I tried to emphasize some general principles of Chrysostom's attitude to and forms of explaining heaven with the earthly *basileus* which seemed to me to emerge from his writings.

The overriding impression of all the material grouped and collated in this study must be the startling simultaneity of contrasting concepts that exist in Chrysostom's works as regards the *basileus* and heaven. The *basileus* can be an expeditious translation, a divinely inspired administrator, an evil machinator. Wealth and imperial insignia are worthless and despicable, but the virtuous Christian reaps greater jewels than those seen on the most beautiful diadem. There is only one heaven, there are several heavens. In the statements collated in Chapter 4, Chrysostom himself sometimes gave the answer how these controversies are to be reconciled - every image and its role is subjected to the momentary needs of preaching. That means that the preacher is highly flexible in his adaptation and application of images to whatever purpose he has in mind. This process may not even be conscious. The resulting question was obvious: how agile is the audience in following such quick turns? And is what Chrysostom implies - that his images are just a means to an end - also understood by his audience? The same chapter that raised these considerations also drew attention to the importance of the scriptural context of Chrysostom's images, and that his colourful variations and embroidered descriptions frequently have their root in an image, an event, a message contained in Scripture.

Then the thesis turned to concentrating on the *basileus*, discovering that while some aspects of kingship - ambition, power, wealth - are seen

negatively, it still provides the best image to illustrate the divine. Chrysostom was made to display the range of elements he takes from the environment of an earthly ruler. However, the negative potential of the basileus emerged in Chapters 5 and 6, although Chrysostom always underlined the lawfulness and the necessity of earthly rule, as well as the fact that his environment and task made it difficult for the *basileus* to resist the temptations of wealth and power and pursue a pure and spiritual life.

In his statements about the relationship between ruler and priest, the element of necessary cooperation had a high profile. It was made clear that the *basileus* is inferior to the representative of God and should submit to his guidance. But the *basileus* - or rather the symbols connected with earthly rule - returned as an expeditious image in Chapter 8. Just as with the figure of the *basileus*, it turned out that Chrysostom's use of these images was not fixed, 'purple', 'diadem' *et. cet.* were used in both a positive and a negative sense.

The subsequent chapters dealing with Chrysostom's descriptions of heaven, however, firmly established the *basileus* as *the* image to describe the spiritual plane, although Chrysostom sometimes pointed out that Christ and God will not be beheld quite like that. In this context, Chrysostom's responsiveness to Scripture was again conspicuous - the different traditions of angelology contained in Scripture emerged, each in its own right, in his descriptions, often in combination with each other, but not integrated into one coherent system. As a side-issue to the discussion of heaven, it appeared that Chrysostom did comparatively little with the concept of the heavenly Jerusalem. Another small enquiry focussed on Chrysostom's relation to St. Paul, and gave rise to the cautionary note that Chrysostom's use of the image of the *basileus* and his concept of heaven are liable to slight changes in a Pauline context.

As the thesis moved into the context of Constantinople, two considerations had to be made - what statements Chrysostom pronounced about earthly rule in imperial presence, and how his customary use of the image of the *basileus*, developed and consolidated in Antioch, worked in this different context of preaching - especially when it is used in a negative sense. A case could be made that by his peculiar use of this imagery, Chrysostom may have contributed to the deterioration of his

relationship with the palace. This process, alongside a growing identification with St. Paul, was then found to have an impact on Chrysostom's own concept of heaven. Symptoms of a disassociation of 'the *basileus* and his court' from heaven could be found, and heaven became more abstract.

Moving away from the discoveries of individual chapters to overall observations, one finds that the two major parts of the thesis also mirrored two interpretations of the use of the image of the *basileus* that were simply prompted by different audiences and context. In Antioch the imagined *basileus* and his court predominantly illustrated the powers and functions of God and heaven. At the same time Chrysostom used both the historical and real *basileis* to point out the dangers of human rule. The audience, inhabitants of a late antique city that had been used to governing itself, could think of remote real imperial figures to identify with these images.[1] In Constantinople this changed - there was one real and present emperor just a few buildings away in a city that was geared towards imperial presence. Any mention of any *basileus* in any context would be related to this emperor, but Chrysostom may not have been aware that his audience would not keep the images he used separate from what he wanted to express with them. Likewise, his scholars have so far not been aware how negatively this circumstance may have influenced his fate.

Parallel to this, Chrysostom's persistent use of 'the *basileus*' was also responsible for a process within him. There are his occasional assurances that heaven cannot be penetrated and fully understood by human thought, no more than it can be expressed by human language. But he so frequently describes heaven in courtly or military terms that he unwittingly must have absorbed this image himself. That this was happening only emerged in Constantinople, when disillusionment with the palace also seemed to result in a qualification and rejection of the courtly heaven.

These were major observations made in the course of the study, along with the overall frequency and importance of the *basileus* and his environment as an image not just for heaven, but for a variety of related spiritual issues. In the end, the thesis points to a number of resulting

[1] See p. 44, 47, 50 for increasing imperial involvement in the governemnt of Antioch.

projects and inquiries. If Chrysostom was so important in subsequent Byzantine Christianity, how was his rather chequered preoccupation with the *basileus* reflected? What is the link between Chrysostom, the heavenly court and liturgy? And much later, when there is at least one instance of the works of Chrysostom being read at imperial banquets, was he perceived as a midwife of the God-emperor parallel in imperial ideology?[2] Was Chrysostom so popular amongst later Byzantines *because* the *basileus* appears so frequently in his works?

These questions seem to refer to Chrysostom, but one should not disregard the development since the God-*basileus* parallel was first put into a public imperial context by Eusebius of Caesarea in such a short text. The brief survey of the Fathers showed that the use of the *basileus* in explaining God continued, but not in such an ideologically charged way, and not to an overwhelming degree. Chrysostom is really the only one to make such extensive use of it. If he turns out to be as different from his successors in this respect as he was from his predecessors and near-contemporaries, and if one considers his popularity, then the argument that he did exert strong influence on later imperial ideology might be found to be viable. One must again consider the infrequency of Chrysostom's own warnings against this image. The more intelligent listeners and readers will understand the qualification, but will still see, like Chrysostom himself, the attractions of the *basileus* and his environment as a translation of God and heaven. The average audience, however, will be influenced by constantly hearing a comparison of God and *basileus*, and could simply infer that the emperor is like God. But will this process, this theory not clash with the abundant negative comparisons between the earthly and the spiritual spheres? Was it not Chrysostom's consistent statements about the worthlessness of even the title and insignia of the *basileus* which helped to turn imperial support away from him? Chrysostom's works from Antioch contained both positive and negative references to the *basileus* and outnumber his more controversial statements from Constantinople, which in any case also included some explicit praise of the imperial couple. A later audience used to predominantly positive references to the *basileus* may not be alert to

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[2] J. Koder, Th. Weber, *Liutprand von Cremona in Konstantinopel*, Byzantina Vindobonensia 13 (Wien, 1980), p.95: 'An die Stelle der faszinierenden Spektakel (Antapodosis VI.9) sind unter dem mönchisch ausgerichteten Soldatenkaiser [Nikephorus] Predigten des heiligen Johannes Chrysostomus (Legatio 29) zur geistigen Erbauung des Gastes bei Tisch getreten'.

the negative implications of some of Chrysostom's statements. This problem points to the necessity of establishing exactly which of his works were favoured reading for later Byzantines. Also, these later Byzantines may not be aware of the strange cross-currents in the affair at Constantinople, and how they affected Chrysostom privately. Frequently, Chrysostom's references to the *basileus* became controversial by their context as much as by their content, and later readers may have had little knowledge of this context.

Very tentatively, I would like to suggest another possible reason for Chrysostom's late popularity. The *basileus* in Chrysostom is in this peculiar tension between good and evil. In the fathers that preceded him, this relationship was a good deal clearer: the *basileus* used as an illustration was predominantly positive, while the real *basileus* was presented positively or negatively according to his merit. This may also apply to Christian writers after Chrysostom – a prompt for ongoing research. This, yet again, highlights Chrysostom in being exceptional in giving so many different shades of meaning to 'the *basileus*', in addition to using it so much more frequently than anybody else. That he is thus isolated may not be perceived by later perusers of patristic writings. They may assume that his use of the *basileus* too is mainly intended and employed for a positive comparison between the affairs of the earth and those of heaven. And as the *basileus* appears so frequently in his works, he may even be seen as a champion of the God-*basileus* ideology. This reconstruction is so far entirely hypothetical and subject to research into later Byzantine writers. It also presumes a lot about how the later Byzantine mind works.

There is another aspect to this theory, helping the idea that in a predominantly positive context Chrysostom's negative qualifications of the *basileus* would recede. One could explore how the parallels between God and *basileus*, heaven and court appeared in art, where a similar metaphor develops.[3] Of course both late antique architecture and individual artefacts have been examined as to their ideological content, but it is especially on the *process* of imperial staples translating into newly developing Christian

[3] S.G.F. Brandon, "Christ in Verbal and Depicted Imagery: A Problem of Early Christian Iconography", Christianity, Judaism and other Greco-Roman Cults [Studies for Morton Smith at Sixty vol.2], *Studies in Judaism in Late Antiquity* 12.2 (1975) 164-172, agrees on p.172: '...time has come for students of Early Christianity to break out from their traditional preoccupation with the texts, and to begin constructing the evidence of the iconography'.

images that one would have to focus. If in later Byzantium the readers of Chrysostom were surrounded by pictorial parallels between court and heaven, they would be preconditioned to interpret any reference to the *basileus* positively - especially as they are living in an age that did not know such fundamental tensions between church and state any more.

There are so many more questions inviting argument that, if one did add to them, this conclusion would snowball to uncontrollable proportions, burying its formal purpose under an avalanche of related topics - a fate not unknown to Chrysostom's homilies. But there is one aspect in which a few more thoughts may be permitted. Has the study of Chrysostom's works under this theme of *basileus* and heaven contributed anything to our knowledge of his personality? Many personal characteristics became obvious just in the extracts quoted - and I think one must not look further. The Chrysostom one perceives in his sermons is *the* Chrysostom, I think there is no private man somewhere outside his preaching activity. Chrysostom can be impulsive, expansive, enthusiastic, optimistic. He had an unlimited, colourful and lightning-quick imagination. He loved to contemplate the night sky. He was caring and truly selfless – none of his works is a narcissistic ego-trip – but when piqued could fly into a rage which let him forget prudence and measure. He seems to have difficulties in seeing other people's point of view, and he occasionally misjudged personalities and situations - to disastrous effect in Constantinople.

But I think Chrysostom's very human 'faults' were helped by the partly self-imposed conditions of his life. For long years his life seemed to consist of solitary meditation, prayer and writing on the one hand and preparing and giving sermons on the other.[4] There seems little room to get used to challenge and discussion, for which there was also little occasion during the Antioch period. This is so different from Basil of Caesarea, who always had had to exert diplomacy and find compromises on behalf of his church. One must also not forget that Chrysostom had not held a position of leadership and responsibility before being catapulted straight to this sensitive position, the see of Constantinople, soon to become a patriarchate. All this may have made Chrysostom a little inflexible by the time he arrived in the capital. The friends he made there would not change that - they venerated his sanctity, which surely did not

[4] He also ate alone – Palladius 12. Sozomen 8.9 mentions that he was considered a difficult personality by his enemies.

include voicing affectionate, but constructive criticism. The letters he wrote to them from exile portray this relationship. Chrysostom is humane, warm, even has a wry sense of humour, he is humble before his fate, but there is the odd patronizing touch. And to the modern mind, Chrysostom has other facets difficult to understand. His attitude to women and to the Jewish nation in particular must be seen in the context of his time and his strong affinity to St. Paul.

But despite all these human imperfections one cannot fail to develop deep respect for Chrysostom after living with his works for any length of time. This respect responds to the absolute, catholic and joyous nature of his faith. I think it was truly beyond Chrysostom to understand people who do not have faith. This may have made him uncompromising, but on the other hand it must have been for the quality of this faith that he was seen as saintly. Maybe, though, this thesis contributed also something to an understanding of how this faith interlinked with Chrysostom's mind. Even he identified spiritual concepts too much with the translations he used to make them tangible for his flock. That he did so is the only explanation for some of the statements made in Constantinople, re-evaluating heaven. If this happened, then one can say that the period at Constantinople was not only traumatic as regards Chrysostom's fate, it also was decisive in forcing him to restructure and elevate his faith, purging it from the ballast even of human images.

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[1] This list presents in an alphabetical order all the works by Chrysostom which already appeared in chronological order on p.36 and 201. The same abbreviations are in use (I = Introduction, E = Edition, T = Translation), and the same cautionary notes apply.

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In diem natalem; PG49-50.351-362; BIII.

In epistulam ad Colossenses homiliae 1-12 (C Colossians); PG62.299-391; J. Ashworth, LF 14, 1843 (T).

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In Genesim homiliae 1-67 (C Genesis); PG53-54.21-581; BVII.

In Genesim sermones 1-9; PG53-54.579-630; BVIII.

In illud: *Domine, non est in homine via eius* (Jeremiah 10.23); PG56.153-162; BX.

In illud: *Habentes eundem spiritum* (II Corinth. 4.13) homiliae 1-3 ; PG51-52.281-302; BV.

In illud: *In faciem ei restiti* (Galatians 2.11); PG51-52.371-388; BV.

In illud: *In qua potestate haec facis* (Matthew 21.23); PG56.411-429; BX; by Severian of Gabala. See CPG 4193.

In illud: *Messis quidem multa* (Matthew 9.37; Luke 10.2); PG63.515-524; BXX.

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Sermo antequam iret in exsilium; PG51-52.427-436; BVI. This is a Latin version. See CPG 4396.

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Quotations from and References to Chrysostom[1]

[1] This index follows alphabetical order, titles of texts are given in full with their abbreviations in brackets. Page numbers in brackets refer to a general reference to or discussion of the text in question. Asterisked page numbers refer to quotations, plain page numbers to references. Arabic numbers refer to homilies, letters and their parts, Roman numbers to the books of treatises. This convention differs from that observed in the main text of the thesis, where Roman and Arabic numbers were used in keeping with the edition from which a text was quoted. This discrepancy is due to the fact that this index is a later addition, reflecting plans for future re-editing of the thesis.